BLACK BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL

Sickness Absence Policy

This **Sickness Policy** adopted by the Council at its Annual Council Meeting May 2021

Last reviewed July 2026

PURPOSE & SCOPE

This Sickness Absence Policy sets out procedures for reporting sickness in a fair and consistent way. As sickness absence can vary in many ways, each case will be considered on its own merits. It applies to all permanent employees of Black Bourton Parish Council, but the scope does not reach to contractors, agency workers or consultants.

Even though all employees of Black Bourton Parish Council are part-time and are responsible for working to their own schedule, it is good practice to have a sickness policy in place, in case of longterm illness. This policy has been prepared with SLCC guidelines, in accordance with current legislation.

RESPONSIBILITY

Parish councillors have overall responsibility for effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with statutory framework.

The clerk is responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of and comply with this policy.

SICK PAY

All employees are entitled to receive statutory sick pay (SSP) from their employer.

- They must be an employee
- They must be too ill to undertake their work on any day that they claim SSP
- They must be absent from work for at least 4 consecutive days (including Sundays and Bank Holidays). This is known as a period of incapacity for work (PIW).
- They must supply evidence of their incapacity.
  For the first 7 days of absence this can be in the form of a self-certificate. For periods of 8 days or more, this must be in the form of a GP Fit Note.

NATIONAL AGREEMENT ON PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Following the 'Green Book' sickness scheme, employees are entitled to receive sick pay for the following periods:

Length of Service	Sickness Pay
During 1st year of service	1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months service) 2 months half pay
During 2nd year of service	2 months full pay and 2 months half pay
During 3rd year of service	4 months full pay and 4 months half pay
During 4th and 5th year of service	5 months full pay and 5 months half pay
After 5 years of service	6 months full pay and 6 months half pay

As of 2019, the current rate of SSP is £94.25, for a duration of 28 weeks, which will be paid directly to the employee through payroll.

The Local authority has the discretion to extend the period of sick pay in exceptional circumstances. Any entitlement to sick pay under the 'Green Book' scheme, will be on a rolling 12-month period.

If an employee is entitled to full pay, then this will be inclusive of SSP. However, if an employee is entitled to a period of half pay, then this half pay will be in addition to SSP, provided the total payable to the employee does exceed normal pay.

If an employee is absent due to contact with an infectious disease, assault or injury arising out of the course of employment, they are entitled to receive normal pay and any absence due to this should not be taken into account under the scheme.

If an employee abuses the sickness scheme; is absent on account of sickness due to deliberate conduct, the employee's own misconduct or an injury due to participation in sport during the individuals own time, the sick pay may be suspended. Cases such as this may be treated under the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

FIT NOTES

Employees must provide evidence of sickness lasting 7 days or more with a 'Fit Note' from a GP who is able to declare if a patient is fit for work or if changes need to be made to an employee's workplace to facilitate a return to work.

Recommendations, which may be considered by the Council, may include:

- A phased return
- Altered hours
- Amended duties • Workplace adaptions.

SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORTING PROCEDURE

To Authorise Absence

- Inform the Clerk and Chairman, by phone, text or e-mail if you are sick for more than 4 days and unable to work
- After 7 days a 'Fit Note' must be sought from a GP or medical practitioner, which should be sent to both the Clerk and the Chairman
- If a doctor declares you 'may' be able to work, then the employee must contact the Clerk and Chairman to discuss additional measures which may be required to facilitate a return to work. If these cannot be implemented then the employee will remain on sick leave. A date will be made to review the situation.
- For concern about an absence or frequent absences a medical note will be required for each episode.

Unauthorised Absence

- Cases of unauthorised absence will be dealt with under our Disciplinary policy.
- Absence that has not been noted according to the Sickness Absence Reporting Schedule (as above), will be treated as unauthorised absence.
- If an employee is not available for work and they have failed to notify the Clerk or Chairman, the line manager (Clerk or Chairman) will try to contact them by phone, text or email. This should not be treated as a substitute for reporting sickness absence.

KEEPING IN CONTACT

During an employee's sick leave, the Clerk, Chairman or delegated councillor shall contact them in order to discuss their well-being. This is to provide reassurance and support to aid recovery, and to identify any work, which may need specific attention. Tasks may be delegated to other members of staff of Councillors and guidance may be needed to ensure compliance and continuity for correct completion.

FIT FOR WORK SERVICE

FFW offers free occupational health assessments. The service is intended to assist employee return to work, using a return to work plan where appropriate. After absences of four weeks or more, the GP or the Council may suggest referring you to FFW, if it is considered beneficial. If it is recommended by a doctor, the employee must inform the Clerk or Chairman.

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

At any time during a long-term sickness, the Council may require your consent to a medical examination by an independent doctor (at the Council's expense). The subsequent report should be shared with the Council.

SICKNESS ABSENCE MEETINGS PROCEDURE

This procedure should follow similar guidelines to a Disciplinary Meeting and may be applied if the employee

- Has been absent due to illness on a number of occasions o 3 or more instances in a 6-month period o 7 days or more sickness in a 12-month period o Any other recurring patterns
- Has highlighted matters that need investigation

The employee should be invited to attend a meeting in a letter, giving at least 5 days' notice, detailing venue, timing and the employee's right to be accompanied. This should be held in a private location with no interruptions.

Meeting	Points of Discussion
1st sickness absence meeting	Discuss reasons for absence Expected duration of condition If the condition is recurring or pre-existing Considering medical advice Considering measures to improve or alleviate symptoms Agree timescale for review and subsequent meetings
2nd sickness absence meeting	Discuss reasons for ongoing absence Expected duration of condition Considering medical advice Considering ability to return to work or remain in post and adjustments that need to be made, including FFW service assessment Agree timescale for review and subsequent meetings, including possibility of dismissal
3rd sickness absence meeting	To review meetings that have previously taken place To discuss progress or change in situation To consider further matters To consider if there is a possibility of a return to work or termination of contract

The meeting should be attended by at least three members of the Personnel Working Party. Meetings should be minuted, but not published.

A termination of contract will be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

Right of Appeal

The employee has a right of appeal. The employee still has a right to be accompanied.

The outcome should be communicated in writing as soon as possible to the employee.

RETURNING TO WORK

Black Bourton Parish Council is committed to helping employees return to work from long-term sickness absence. The Council will support a return to work by

- Obtaining medical advice
- Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices or working hours

If an employee feels that they are unable to return to work, then the Council will discuss options for a termination of contract.