



Hilton Village Hall Attendance Management Procedure

Statement of Policy

Hilton Village Hall Directors are committed to promoting the wellbeing of its employees and improving attendance.

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Absence from work is a cost to both Hilton Village Hall and the Attendance Management Procedure is the responsibility of all employees.

It is the responsibility of Hilton Village Hall Directors to make the most effective use of its employees and the Attendance Management Procedure contributes to that objective.

This procedure should be used for managing sickness and unsatisfactory attendance.

Key Principles

1. This procedure enables Hilton Village Hall Directors to address attendance issues, both short- and long-term, in a fair, consistent and equitable manner. It is recognised however that all cases must be dealt with on an individual basis because of differing circumstances therefore this procedure gives an outline of the principles to be observed.
2. Early intervention is important to minimise the impact of ill-health on attendance or performance.
3. Hilton Village Hall Directors, the Company Secretary and employees should work in partnership. They should explore what the employee can do, or might be capable of doing with help and support, to continue to work or return to work whilst they recover. This is called a **work focussed** approach. This approach should also be adopted if an employee becomes ill at work.

Hilton Village Hall Directors and the Company Secretary as the employee's Line Manager

4. Hilton Village Hall Directors and the Company Secretary as the Line Manager of our employee's should:
 - Focus on early intervention and be proactive in addressing health issues which may affect attendance or performance.
 - Work in partnership with employees to achieve a satisfactory level of attendance by helping them to continue to work when they experience ill-health or return to work as soon as possible following a period of sickness absence.

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- Hold a formal Attendance Meeting with all employees who reach the Consideration Trigger Point and make a decision on whether to take formal action.

Employees

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5. Employees should:
 - Attend work unless they are not well enough to do so and return to work as soon as they are able.
 - Talk to the Company Secretary as their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity about any health issues which might affect their attendance or performance.
 - Be aware of their Consideration Trigger Point and the required action if they reach or exceed it.
 - Work in Partnership with the Company Secretary to achieve a satisfactory level of attendance. This means exploring ways to enable them to work when they experience ill-health or return to work as soon as possible following a period of sickness absence.
6. This procedure will be invoked where the Directors or Company Secretary has cause for concern regarding an employee's short-term persistent or long-term absence.
7. Hilton Village Hall Directors recognise that everybody is sick or subject to emergencies from time to time, however, regular attendance at work is a contractual requirement.
8. Short-term absenteeism refers to a series of illnesses that are often unconnected which result in frequent, short periods of absence.
9. It is acknowledged that occasions do arise when people are away from work on a long-term basis as a result of chronic or acute ill health. Although each case will be dealt with on an individual basis this procedure outlines certain principles that will always be observed. Long-term absence would normally be classed as at least six weeks continuous absence.
10. This procedure applies to ALL staff within Hilton Village Hall except for employees currently in their probationary period.
11. Advice should be taken from the Company Secretary at all formal stages of this procedure to ensure the consistent application of this procedure throughout Hilton Village Hall.

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12. In accordance with the Hilton Village Hall Directors Equality Policy, this procedure will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation trade union membership, or any other personal characteristics.

13. The policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically giving due consideration to any legislative changes.

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Notifying Absence:

14. The employee should telephone the Company Secretary to report their absence from work no later than 10am on the first day of their sickness absence and every morning they are off sick thereafter by 10am. Where the Company Secretary is unavailable, a message should be left with the Company Secretary's Administration Assistant being the Hilton Village Hall Booking Clerk.

15. Other forms of contact to notify sickness absence, such as a text or an email should only be used if a telephone call is not possible. In these situations, the Company Secretary should make a follow up telephone call to the employee (or their alternative contact where the employee is not capable due to their medical condition/treatment) as soon as possible.

16. The Company Secretary should agree **keep in touch** arrangements with the employee during the initial conversation.

17. During the telephone conversation the Company Secretary and the employee should have a **work focussed** discussion. There may be occasions, however where this may not be appropriate, for example if the employee is in hospital. In this case it should be delayed until a more appropriate stage in their recovery.

18. Following the initial contact with the employee the Company Secretary should:

- Open a sickness absence record
- Carry out an individual Risk Assessment if the reason for the sickness absence is stress related.
- Consider whether a referral to see a doctor is appropriate. An early referral is strongly recommended if the sickness absence is due to stress or a musculoskeletal condition.

Possible Unauthorised Absence

19. If the employee does not attend work and does not make contact with the Company Secretary, the Company Secretary should try to get in touch using the most appropriate means. As a last resort, this may mean contacting their next of kin or visiting the employee at their home address.

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Certifying the Sickness Absence.

20. The employee must complete a self-certificate for sickness absence of 7 calendar days or less, as soon as possible, unless a Fit Note is provided from the start of the sickness absence.
21. For sickness absences of 8 calendar days or more, the employee must provide a Fit Note. This should be submitted as soon as possible. During longer periods of sickness absence, the employee should send the Company Secretary all Fit Notes they receive during their sickness absence.
22. The Company Secretary should use the self-certificate or Fit Note to update the sickness absence records.
23. Failure to provide a self-certificate or a Fit Note may result in **disciplinary** action and/or action to stop pay.

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During Sickness Absence

24. The Company Secretary should keep in touch with the employee, as agreed, during their sickness absence. Employees can request copies of records made of conversations during informal keeping in touch meetings.
25. The Company Secretary should adopt a work focussed approach during all discussions with the employee throughout their sickness absence.
26. If the employee reaches or exceeds their Consideration Trigger Point during their sickness absence, the Company Secretary should carry out a Formal Attendance Meeting when the employee returns to work.
27. If the sickness absence reaches 14 consecutive calendar days, the Company Secretary should follow the guidance on continuous sickness absence.

Part-day absences

28. A Part-day sickness absence is where an employee attends work for part of the day before going home due to illness or injury. Part-day sickness absences are treated differently for sick pay and Attendance Management purposes.

Sick Pay

29. Where an employee attends work for more than half of their contracted hours, this will count as a full day attendance for sick pay purposes and will not count towards any calculations for half or nil sick pay.

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Attendance Management.

30. For Attendance Management purposes, where an employee works for:

- One hour or less, this will count as one day sickness absence and will count towards the Consideration Trigger Point for formal action.
- More than one hour but less than half of their daily contracted hours, will count as half-day sickness absence and will count towards the Consideration Trigger Point for formal action.
- More than half of their daily contracted hours, this should be treated as a full day's attendance and not recorded as a sickness absence. Therefore it will not count towards the Consideration Trigger Point for formal action.

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Sickness Absence during Annual Leave

- 31.** If an employee is ill whilst on Annual Leave, they can choose whether to have the days which they are unwell treated as annual leave or sickness absence.
- 32.** If the employee chooses to have them treated as sickness absence, they must follow the normal rules on notifying the Company Secretary of their sickness absence, keeping in touch and providing medical evidence. Annual Leave cannot be counted as sickness absence retrospectively.
- 33.** Exceptionally, the employee may be unable to notify the Company Secretary on the first day they are unwell, for example if they are abroad and in a remote area. The employee must obtain documentary evidence of their incapacity and submit this to the Company Secretary on their return. For example, evidence might include receipts for medical diagnosis and/or treatment, or contact with the travel insurance company. A Fit Note retrospectively by an employee's own doctor cannot be accepted as proof of incapacity whilst abroad.
- 34.** If sickness absence is taken instead of annual leave, no deduction should be made from the employee's Annual Leave entitlement for the period covered by the medical evidence. This means that Annual Leave can be taken at another time.

Annual Leave during Sickness Absence

- 35.** For pay purposes only, an employee can take annual leave concurrently during a period of sickness absence. They should submit their request for annual leave to the Company Secretary, in advance, in the normal way.
- 36.** This means an employee will receive full pay for any periods of annual leave regardless of their entitlement to sick pay.

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37. The annual leave does not break the total length of the sickness absence. The annual leave and sickness absence will run concurrently and the period of sickness absence will count towards the Consideration Trigger Point level and for half/nil sick pay calculation.

Returning to work

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38. The Company Secretary and employee should have a Return to Work Discussion following every period of sickness absence, ideally on the day the employee returns to work or if this is not possible for operational reasons, at the first opportunity thereafter. The Return to Work Discussion should include a review of all sickness absences in the rolling 12 month period.
39. Following the Return to work discussion, the Company Secretary should ensure they promptly close the sickness absence on file.
40. If the employee has reached or exceeded their Consideration Trigger Point, their sickness absence level should be formally considered. The Company Secretary should hold a Formal Attendance Meeting to decide whether to take formal action with the employee.

Exceptions

There are six exceptions where sickness absence will automatically not count towards Consideration Trigger Points. Discretion may be awarded in other cases, subject to evidence based decisions by the Company Secretary.

The six automatic exceptions are for individual absence periods that relate to:

- Pregnancy
- Qualified injury at work
- Disability and reasonable adjustment have not yet been considered or made
- Victims of violent crime
- Infertility treatment (maximum of three cycles)
- Notifiable communicable diseases

If any of the above apply, they will be recorded as an exception. Recording an exception will remove the absence period from the Trigger Calculation.

Taking Informal Action

41. The Company Secretary should consider Taking informal action if the employee's sickness absence level gives cause for concern but is below the Consideration Trigger Point. Informal action may include discussion about part-day sickness

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absences, a perceived pattern of sickness absence or concerns that the employee's health is affecting, or might effect, their attendance.

42. Informal action should focus on trying to help the employee maintain a satisfactory level of attendance. The Company Secretary should:

- Tell the employee that they are concerned about their level of sickness absence.
- Give the employee the opportunity to discuss any issues which they feel are affecting or might affect their attendance.
- Adopt a work focussed approach to reduce the likelihood of further sickness absence.
- Consider whether health advice is needed to understand the impact of the employee's health on their attendance.

43. The Company Secretary is advised to keep a brief note of the discussion.

Managing attendance

44. The default Consideration Trigger Point for employees, is either 6 working days or 3 spells of sickness absence (pro rata for part-time staff) during either:

- The rolling 12 month period – (the 12 months up to the last day of the most recent sickness absence)

and or

- Any formal 12 month attendance review period.

45. The employee may reach or exceed the Consideration Trigger Point by taking frequent, short sickness absences and continuous spells of sickness absence. Part-day sickness absence counts towards the Consideration Trigger Point, including Consideration Trigger Points set during the 12 month Attendance Review Period.

46. When the employee returns to work and if the sickness absence level reaches or exceeds the Consideration Trigger Point, the Company Secretary should arrange a formal meeting to discuss attendance. Annex A sets out all the steps to follow when holding a formal meeting.

Decision points during formal action for unsatisfactory attendance

47. Formal action for unsatisfactory attendance consists of the following decision points:

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- Stage one – First Written Attendance Warning – Considered when the employee reaches or exceeds their Consideration Trigger Point.
- Stage 2 – Final Attendance Warning – When the employee reaches or exceeds their Consideration Trigger Point following stage 1 – First Written Attendance Warning.
- Stage 3 – Consideration of dismissal – When the employee reaches or exceeds their Consideration Trigger Point following a stage 2 – Final Written Warning or when a continuous sickness absence can no longer be supported. HR advice must be sought before action is taken.

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48. The employee has the right of appeal at each decision point.

Written Attendance Warning

- 49.** Where an employee's sickness absence level has reached or exceeded their Consideration Trigger Point, the Company Secretary should consider whether a Written Attendance Warning is appropriate. In all cases the Company Secretary must hold a Formal Attendance Meeting before making any decision. The warning seeks to alert the employee that their attendance level must improve. The Company Secretary and employee should work in partnership to identify any support which may be needed to help them achieve this.

When it is not appropriate for a Written Attendance Warning to be given

- 50.** If the sickness absence is pregnancy related, a Written Attendance Warning must not be given. The Company Secretary can tell the employee at the Return to Work discussion that they will not be given a warning. However, they should still meet with the employee to discuss ways of helping them prevent or minimise further absences.
- 51.** A warning should not be given if the sickness absence is due to an injury sustained, or disease contracted, in the course of the employee's duties. The employee may be able to claim injury benefit. If injury benefit is awarded, the Company Secretary should exempt the sickness absence up to a maximum of six months' as a qualified injury at work. This will ensure full pay for six months before normal sick pay arrangements as per the Contract of Employment are applied. Any subsequent sickness absence should be treated in the same way as other sickness absence.
- 52.** The Company Secretary may use her discretion not to give a Written Improvement Warning. The Company Secretary should consider the circumstances of the absence and the employee's absence history. They should ensure all relevant absence periods have been awarded an exemption. If the Company Secretary decides not to give a Written Warning, they must record their decision.

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Improvement and Sustained Improvement Periods

53. A Written Attendance Warning lasts for 12 months and is monitored in two phases: a 3 month Improvement Period (live warning period) followed by 9 months Sustained Improvement Period.

54. The Company Secretary should inform the employee of the attendance standard they are expected to meet during the 3 month Improvement Period (live warning). This will be a proportion of their normal Consideration Trigger Point. During the 3 month Improvement Period, this will be either the default 2 days (regardless of working pattern/hours – not pro-rata) or 25% of their reasonably adjusted Consideration Trigger Point.

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Attendance is satisfactory at the end of the 3 month Improvement Period

55. If attendance is satisfactory on completion of the 3 month Improvement Period, the Company Secretary should arrange a formal meeting with the employee to tell them they have met the attendance standard expected of them.

56. Annex A sets out all the steps to follow when holding a formal meeting.

57. During the meeting the Company Secretary should follow all the steps in Annex A and :

- Acknowledge that the employee's attendance has been satisfactory.
- Inform the employee that they are now subject to a 9 month Sustained Improvement Period. The Sustained Improvement Period starts immediately following the end of the 3 month Improvement Period.
- Tell the employee they are expected to maintain a satisfactory level of attendance during the 9 month Sustained Improvement Period. Attendance will be considered again formally if their absence level reaches or exceeds their normal Consideration Trigger Point.
- Explain to the employee that absences will continue to be monitored during the 9 month Sustained Improvement Period. If they have further absences and reach their Considered Trigger Point, A Formal Attendance Meeting will be held for the next decision point.

Attendance remains satisfactory at the end of the 9 month Sustained Improvement Period.

58. If attendance is satisfactory on completion of the 9 month Sustained Improvement Period, the Company Secretary should arrange a formal meeting with the employee to tell them they have met the attendance standard expected of them.

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59. Annex A sets out all the steps to follow when holding a formal meeting.

60. During the meeting the Company Secretary should follow all the steps in Annex A, acknowledge that the employee's attendance has been satisfactory and inform the employee that formal action has now ended.

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61. Future absences will continue to be monitored on a rolling 12 month basis and formal meetings conducted if the employee reaches the Consideration Trigger Point.

Attendance is unsatisfactory during the 3 month Improvement Period or/and the 9 month Sustained Improvement Period.

62. If attendance is unsatisfactory during the 3 month Improvement Period or the 9 month Sustained Improvement Period, formal action may move onto the next decision point. The Company Secretary does not need to wait until the employee has completed the Improvement Period or Sustained Improvement Period before taking formal action.

63. The Company Secretary should arrange a Formal Attendance Meeting with the employee to tell them they have not met the attendance standard expected of them.

64. Annex A sets out all the steps to follow when holding a formal meeting.

65. During the meeting the Company Secretary should follow all the steps in Annex A and:

- Tell the employee that their attendance has been unsatisfactory during the 3 month Improvement Period or 9 month Sustained Improvement Period.
- Give the employee the opportunity to present any new information.
- Consider whether, in light of all available evidence, formal action moves to the next decision point.

66. After the meeting the Company Secretary should inform the employee in writing of their decision to either:

- Move to the next stage decision point or formal action, or
- Take no further action at this point, in which case their 3 month Improvement Period or 9 month Sustained Improvement Period continues to its original end date.

67. If the employee does not meet the attendance level expected of them following stage 2 - Final Written Attendance Warning, dismissal shall automatically be considered.

Continuous Absence

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- 68.** A continued period of sickness absence is one which reaches 14 consecutive calendar days.
- 69.** During any continuous sickness absence period, the Company Secretary and employee should work together to explore that the employee can do, or might be capable of doing with help and support, to return work as soon as they are able to do so.
- 70.** Following a period of continuous sickness absence, when an employee returns to work, the Company Secretary should hold a formal Attendance Review Meeting if the Consideration Trigger Point has been reached or exceeded.

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Linking periods of continuous sickness absence

- 71.** Periods of continuous sickness absence can be linked together for Attendance Management purposes.
- 72.** If a period of continuous sickness absence is followed by another, the absence may be linked for monitoring purposes and treated as a single absence. This means the Company Secretary can continue the attendance monitoring actions from the point they had previously reached. This would only happen if:
- The sickness absences are different, unrelated reasons but the gap between the sickness absences is 2 weeks or less (unless the absence was due to a particular long or serious illness in which case the gap could be up to 2 months), or
 - The sickness absence is for the same reason. The Company Secretary should consider how long the employee was back at work relative to the length of the absence, or
 - The employee returns to work Part-Time on medical grounds and is unable to sustain the increase in their contracted hours and is absent due to sickness again.

Meeting during continuous sickness absence

- 73.** There are two types of meetings which should take place between the Company Secretary and the employee during continuous (long term) sickness absence.
- An informal review – To keep in touch with the employee and explore the support needed to help the employee return to work.
 - A Formal Attendance Review Meeting – To explore the support needed, but also to consider whether the employee is likely to return within a reasonable time frame, and therefore whether the business can continue to support the level of absence (whether in the current or an alternative team role, if appropriate). This

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is a formal meeting where the employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union Representative/ Official.

74. These meetings should take place at the following points:

- An informal review after 14 consecutive calendar days of sickness absence – by Keeping in Touch with the employee on sickness absence.
- A Formal Attendance Review Meeting after 28 consecutive calendar days, another when the sickness absence has lasted 3 months, and every quarter thereafter. Informal meetings or Keep in Touch reviews may be appropriate and helpful at interim stages – see below. Of course, there is no need to hold an informal review in a month where a Formal Attendance Review Meeting is scheduled – See Annex A.

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For example

Informal – Keep In Touch

14 days

Month 2

Months 4 & 5

Months 7 & 8

Months 10 & 11

Formal Attendance Review Meetings

28 days

Month 3

Month 6

Month 9

Month 12 – Mandatory consideration of dismissal

Informal Review – Keep in Touch

75. Informal reviews should take place during periods of continuous sickness absence, including any which are pregnancy-related. The first informal review should be carried out when a period of sickness absence reaches 14 continuous calendar days unless the employee is due to return to work in the next few days, in which case a return to work discussion would take place.

76. Further informal reviews should take place if a period of sickness absence reaches the 2 month stage and then be held on a monthly basis, between the formal stages. Exceptionally, the Company Secretary and employee may agree that less frequent reviews are appropriate.

77. In a month where a Formal Attendance Review Meeting is required, there is no need to hold an informal review in addition.

78. It is important to continue with informal reviews on a monthly basis, in between Formal Attendance Review Meetings, as the purpose of the informational review

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is to keep in touch with the employee and establish whether there is any support which can be provided to help the employee return to work.

79. During an informal review Keep in Touch the Company Secretary should:

- Ask the employee how they are feeling and where they are in their recovery.
- Discuss any medical advice, for example from the GP or Consultant.
- Ask the employee when they think they may be able to return to work and what support they need to achieve this, and remind the employee of the Attendance Management process and that formal review meetings will take place at the Consideration Trigger Points.
- Bring the employee up to date with any key developments in their work area and/or the organisation.

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80. Following the informal Review – Keep in Touch, with the employee, the Company Secretary should consider whether the sickness absence can continue to be supported, except when the sickness absence is pregnancy-related. If the Company Secretary believes that the sickness absence cannot be supported, they will need to arrange a Formal Attendance Review Meeting.

81. The first Formal Attendance Review Meeting should take place when sickness absence reaches 28 consecutive calendar days, unless the employee is due to return to work in the next few days.

82. Further Formal Attendance Review Meetings should be held:

- When an employee has been absent for 3 months and then 3 months thereafter, as a minimum.
- If, following an informal review, the Company Secretary considers an absence cannot continue to be supported.

83. Annex A sets out all the steps to follow when holding a formal meeting.

84. During the meeting the Company Secretary should:

- Undertake the same actions as in the informal review, and
- Discuss with the employee whether a return to work is likely within a reasonable timescale.
- Consider whether the sickness absence can continue to be supported.

85. If a return to work is likely within a reasonable timescale and/or the absence can continue to be supported, the Company Secretary should arrange an informal review with the employee to be held in a month's time.

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86. If a return to work is not likely within a reasonable timescale and/or the absence cannot continue to be supported, the Company Secretary should arrange a Formal Meeting with the employee to be held as soon as possible.

Considering Dismissal

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87. Dismissal should be considered when the Attendance Management Procedure has been followed and advice has been sought and:
- Attendance has not improved to a satisfactory level following a stage 2 final Written Attendance Warning, or
 - A return to work is not expected within a reasonable time frame during a period of continuous absence.
88. The Company Secretary may consider dismissal but if unsure she should gather all the relevant information and refer the case to the Chairperson of the Parish Council.
89. The Company Secretary or the Chairperson to the Parish Council should conduct a consideration of dismissal formal meeting with the employee before making a decision of dismissal.
90. When arranging a formal meeting, the Company Secretary or Chairperson to the Parish Council should follow the relevant steps in Annex A.
91. At the meeting the Company Secretary or the Chairperson to the Parish Council should:
- Explain why they are considering dismissal, and
 - Give the employee the opportunity to present any new information which might affect their decision.
92. After the meeting the Company Secretary or the Chairperson to the Parish Council should consider the information and make a decision.

Decision is dismissal

93. The Company Secretary or the Chairperson of the Parish Council should dismiss the employee if all of the following apply:
- The business can no longer support the employee's level of sickness absence.
 - Where appropriate, there are no further reasonable adjustments which can be made to help the employee return to satisfactory attendance levels.

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- Health Advice has been received within the last 3 months, unless the employee withheld their consent for a Health referral or for Hilton Village Hall Directors to contact their GP.

94. If the decision is to dismiss, the Company Secretary or the Chairperson to the Parish Council should consider whether compensation is appropriate. The Full Council must authorise the final inefficiency compensation payment.

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Decision is no further action

95. If the Company Secretary or the Chairperson to the Parish Council decides not to dismiss, the Attendance Management Process will continue. This means that:

- The Improvement Period or Sustained Improvement Period will continue to the original end date. Any additional absences may lead to dismissal being re-considered.
- Formal Attendance Meetings will continue during a period of continuous sickness absence. The decision to dismiss may be reconsidered if the sickness absence can no longer be supported.

Following the decision

96. After making their decision the Company Secretary or Chairperson to the Parish Council should:

- Make a full written record of the discussion and the outcome. This should include the reason for the decision.
- Write to the employee within 5 working days of the meeting to advise them of the decision taken and the reasons for it, including a summary of the key points from the meeting. If the decision is to dismiss, the letter should include the effective date of dismissal, details of the notice period and any compensation payment.
- Tell the employee that they have a right to appeal against their dismissal within 5 working days of receiving the letter.

Appeals

97. There is one right of appeal at each decision point in the Attendance Management Procedure.

98. The employee has 10 working days from the date of receipt of the decision to submit their appeal to the Company Secretary or to the Chairperson of the Parish Council. The appeal should clearly state the grounds for the employee's appeal and their desired outcome.

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99. There are three grounds of appeal:

- A procedural error has occurred, and/or
- The decision is not supported by the information/evidence available to the Company Secretary or the Chairperson of the Parish Council and/or
- New information/evidence has become available which should be taken into account when reaching a decision.

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100. If the appeal does not satisfy the above grounds of the appeal, The Company Secretary or the Chairperson to the Parish Council should reject it and notify the employee, in writing, of this decision.

101. Employees may not raise a grievance where a right of appeal exists under this or any other procedure which is able to address the issues raised.

102. Appeals should be heard by 2 other members of the Hilton Village Hall Committee being the Vice Chairperson and one other Director independent, in other words they have had no previous involvement in the case.

103. The appeal process should continue in parallel with, and not delay, any ongoing actions under the Attendance Management Procedure, including the start of any notice period. The Appeal Council Member's decision is final being the Vice Chairperson and one other Parish Council Member.

104. If the appeal meets the criteria, the Appeal Council Members should conduct a formal meeting with the employee before making a decision.

105. When arranging the meeting, the Appeal Council Members should follow the relevant steps for formal meetings in Annex A.

106. Before the meeting the appeal members should:

- Check they have all the papers relating to the decision
- Check that the procedure has been followed correctly
- Ensure they understand the ground for the appeal
- Fully consider all the points raised by the employee at their appeal
- Consider evidence used for the original decision and any new evidence provided by the employee.

107. Any appeal hearing is a full re-hearing of the case. This means that the Appeal Council Members must consider all the facts afresh and come to their own decision.

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108. Following the meeting, the Appeal Council Members should decide whether to uphold the appeal. They should write to the employee notifying them of their decision within 5 working days of the meeting.

109. The decision letter should include:

- Whether or not the appeal is upheld or rejected and the reason for this decision
- Any recommended actions such as dispute resolution/mediation, further attendance reviews/meetings with the employee and reasonable adjustments.

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Other things to consider

Confidentiality

110. Sickness absence records are confidential and should only be viewed by, or communicated to Council Members and Health providers if necessary and in accordance with Data Protection Policies. Disciplinary action may be taken for any inappropriate handling or processing of personal data.

Retention of documents

111. When keeping records relating to an employee's health, the Company Secretary should mark them as Official Sensitive – Personal, and store them securely.

Disability leave

112. Disability leave may be granted where the employee is absent because they are waiting for an agreed adjustment to be implemented, such as the provision or repair of specialist equipment. It may also be granted if an employee is waiting for the appropriate training to use specialist equipment, Disability leave may only be allowed if the employee would be fit to attend work and carry out their duties if the adjustment was in place.

113. The Company Secretary should always explore with the employee whether they are able to undertake any meaningful work whilst they wait for a reasonable adjustment to be put in place. They should discuss with the employee whether any temporary workplace adaptations will enable them to continue to work or return to work until the reasonable adjustment is implemented. Disability leave should only be given when this is not possible.

114. Disability leave is not treated in the same way as sickness absence and therefore does not count towards the employee reaching the Consideration Trigger Point.

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Other health related absences

115. Employees may occasionally need to take time off from work to deal with health related issues. For example and not exhaustive.

- To attend doctor/optician/dental/hospital appointments
- To receive treatment locally, for example kidney dialysis, infertility treatment, cancer treatment.
- Rehabilitation after an injury, for example physiotherapy, hydrotherapy.
- Where the employee has medical advice that they should refrain from work following contact with a notifiable communicable disease, and
- An employee undergoes gender re-assignment is likely to require time off from work for medical and surgical procedures. This should not be recorded as sickness absence and will not count towards the sickness absence trigger points.
- Staff who wish to have cosmetic surgery should take annual leave unless it is required as a result of a serious medical condition or injury or recommended by a medical practitioner.
- Medical appointments overseas where there is no provision in their country of work/residence.

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116. Where possible, employees should attend appointments in their own time. If they are unable to do so, they should try to minimise any disruption to Hilton Village Hall, for example by attending appointments at the beginning or end of the day. The employee should give the Company Secretary as much notice as possible of the appointment and provide evidence of their appointment time, if requested.

117. Where the employee has been unable to arrange an appointment in their own time, the Company Secretary has discretion to give the employee paid time off, such as a flexi credit, for reasonable health related absences.

118. The Company Secretary has discretion to approve a request to enable employees to attend personal medical appointment where the employee has no flexibility about the timing. Paid time off should only be given where the employee would otherwise be fit to attend work. If the employee is unfit to attend work, the absence is recorded as sickness absence.

Returning Part-Time on Medical Grounds

119. Returning to work part-time on medical grounds is a formal arrangement to help the employee return to work gradually, usually after a long or severe illness. The employee returns to work for some of their usual hours and the remainder are recorded as sickness absence. The number of hours worked will

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increase over a period of time (usually a maximum of 13 weeks) until the employee resumes their contracted working hours.

- 120.** On returning from long term sickness, A Formal Attendance Meeting should be held. Where an employee returns to work on a part-time on medical grounds. The Formal Attendance Meeting should be held at the end of the period of part-time on medical grounds rather than on the employee's initial return from sickness absence.

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- 121.** The Company Secretary can agree either or a combination of formal or informal part-time on medical ground arrangements.

Formal part-time on medical grounds

- 122.** The period of sickness absence agreed as formal part-time on medical grounds arrangements will be subject to the usual rules on sick pay but will not count towards the Consideration Trigger Point or any formal action for unsatisfactory attendance. Any period of sickness absence taken during the agreed hours of work, will count towards the Consideration Trigger Point.

Informal part-time on medical grounds

The Company Secretary has discretion to approve periods of annual leave as informal part-time on medical ground arrangements. Periods of annual leave used as informal part-time on medical grounds will not be subject to usual rules on sick pay or the Consideration Trigger Points. Any period of sickness absence taken during the agreed hours of work, will count towards the Consideration Trigger Point.

Annex A – Holding a Formal Meeting

The following steps apply to all formal meetings and should be followed carefully. Any additional steps relating to a specific meeting are set out in the relevant part of the procedures.

Before the meeting

- The Company Secretary and employee should read the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure and make sure they understand what decisions may be taken following the meeting.
- The Company Secretary should write to the employee inviting them to a meeting to discuss their attendance. Where possible the meeting should be face-to-face at their usual workplace. The letter should:
 - Give at least 5 working days' notice.
 - Tell the employee that they are expected to attend the meeting as scheduled unless there are exceptional circumstances why they cannot

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attend. In this case, they should inform the Company Secretary as soon as possible.

- Inform the employee of who the note taker will be and give them the opportunity to raise any concerns with that person taking the notes.
- Advise the employee they have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative, Trade Union Official or a work colleague.
- Explain the reason for the meeting, what issues will be discussed and what the possible outcome could be.
- Enclose copies of any correspondence relating to the employee's sickness absence, which will be referred to during the meeting. If the employee is on a continuous period of sickness absence, send them a copy of the Attendance Management Policy and procedure.

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The Company Secretary should also:

- Make any reasonable adjustments which are necessary to enable an employee with a disability to attend a formal meeting.
- Postpone the meeting once if the Trade Union Representative, Trade Union Official or work colleague the employee has chosen cannot attend. The meeting must be held within 5 working days of the original scheduled date. If this is not possible, the Company Secretary should make a decision about the case taking into account all the available evidence.
- Review the available information about the employee's sickness absence history and consider the possible outcomes. This may also include (not exhaustive):
 - From the Employee – Any medical reports or advice from their GP, specialist or consultant.
 - From the Employer – Any Health Safety and Wellbeing reports.
 - External Sources – Specialist organisation website or explanatory advice.

In the meeting:

- The Company Secretary should take the following actions for all meetings:
 - Ensure notes of the meeting are taken
 - Notify the employee of the potential outcomes including dismissal.
 - Give the employee the opportunity to raise anything they think is relevant prior to the Company Secretary making a decision about next steps.
 - Remind the employee about any support which may be available.
 - Tell the employee about the next steps.

The following actions are not applicable for Appeal Meetings. However, the Company Secretary should take these actions for all other meetings:

- Review the employee's absence history and consider if any exceptions should have been applied to individual periods of absence.

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- Explain the purpose of the meeting i.e. to help the employee to return to a satisfactory level of attendance, support them in their return to work or to determine whether the sickness absence can be supported.
- Ask the employee what steps they are taking to help themselves to return to a satisfactory level of attendance.
- Explore whether there are any temporary workplace adaptations or reasonable adjustments which might enable the employee to achieve a satisfactory level of attendance or a return to work.
- Review any reasonable adjustments which are already in place for employees with a disability and check whether they continue to be effective or necessary. The Company Secretary should also consider whether any further adjustments are needed to support the employee.
- Consider whether Health Advice is needed to enable them to make a decision about the next steps and discuss this with the employee.

After the meeting:

The Company Secretary should take the following steps for all meetings:

- Consider all of the available information and make a decision.
- Write to the employee within 5 working days of the meeting. Advise the employee of the decision taken and the reason for it. Include the record of the discussion, this should be signed by the employee.
- Take forward any agreed actions and update the employee on progress.

The following actions are not applicable for Appeal Meetings. However, the Company Secretary should take these actions for all other meetings:

- Talk to the employee about any Health Advice received. Consider any recommendations and how they can be implemented.
- Update the employee's sickness record and retrospective exceptions that have been agreed.

Annex B – Checklist for referring a case to Hilton Village Hall Directors as the Decision Maker.

The Company Secretary should provide the relevant Directors with the relevant information to enable them to make a decision. This should normally include:

- The reason why Hilton Village Hall Directors can no longer support the sickness absence.

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- A written summary of the case so far including all actions taken to date, copies of any letters issued and notes of all discussions with the employee relating to their sickness absence.
- A copy of all Health Advice, including advice issued within the last 3 months, or details when consent for a Health Referral or GP Referral was asked for and refused.
- Information on any temporary workplace adaptations or reasonable adjustments which have been considered and made. If these have not been implemented, the Company Secretary should include any explanation for the reasons.
- A copy of a Stress Risk Assessment if appropriate.
- A copy of the Return to Work Plan where appropriate.
- The employee's sickness absence records for at least the last two years.
- A copy of the employee's job description.

Annex C – Pro-Rata Consideration Trigger Points

The following Trigger Points apply to a 12 month rolling period and all 12 month Attendance Management Review Periods.

The pro-rata trigger equates to one working week plus one day. Correct sick absence calculations are reliant on the employee's weekly working pattern being recorded correctly.

Days Contracted to Work	Absence Days	Spells of Absence
1	2	2
1.5	2	2
2	3	3
2.5	3	3
3	4	3
3.5	4	3
4	5	3
4.5	5	3
5	6	3
5.5	7	3
6	7	3

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Hilton Village Hall
Self-Certification Form

SICKNESS ABSENCE SELF-CERTIFICATE

Self-Certification is required for ALL periods of absence up to and including seven days, after which a doctor's Fit Note will be required.

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS

NAME: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms.....

ADDRESS:.....

.....

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.....**POST CODE:**.....

JOB TITLE:.....

PERIOD OF SICKNESS

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DATE OF ABSENCE

FROM DATE: (FIRST DATE OF ABSENCE).....

TO DATE: (RETURN TO WORK DATE).....

DETAILS OF SICKNESS/INJURY

I was unfit to attend for work for the following reason:- (e.g. influenza, rheumatism, injury at work, etc)

.....

.....

.....

DECLARATION

I declare that I have not worked during the period of sickness stated above and that the information given is factually correct.

EMPLOYEES

SIGNATURE.....DATE.....

COMPANY

SECRETARY

SIGNATURE.....DATE.....

Declaration

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I confirm that I have read and understand the Absence Management Procedure and will abide by the procedure contained within:

Name:

.....

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Job

Description:.....

Date:

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