

## **APPRAISAL SCHEME**

Employees are the major resource for achieving objectives. Effective people management is directly related to improvements in service delivery and can affect both the employee in terms of motivation and commitment and the Council in delivering excellent services and achieving results.

### **INTRODUCTION**

This document outlines the procedure of the Appraisal Scheme. It describes the action to be taken by line managers (appraiser) and their employees (appraisee) in preparing for, conducting and following up the review meeting.

### **SCOPE**

**This scheme applies to all employees, with variations as follows:**

**New Starters** - all new starters must have had an appraisal within the first six months of their employment in line with the Probationary Procedure. Joint Assistant Directors must then ensure that these employees are included into the fixed cycle of the appraisals and reviews from then on.

**Casuals** - where casual employees work less than **9 hours** per month they should be excluded from the scheme. Any queries on the determination of casuals can be obtained from the HR and Payroll Team.

**Fixed term staff** – on 9 month contracts or less. Training needs will have been identified at Induction or during the probationary period.

**Long-Term Absences** – the appraisals for employees who have been on long-term absence should be picked up as soon as reasonably practicable.

**Group appraisals** - These can be completed for groups of employees. There is a form designed specifically for this, which is available on the Intranet. Whilst it is permissible to have a Grouped Performance Appraisal Plan and Grouped Learning and Development Plan completed at the initial appraisal (April-June) all employees in the Group Appraisal must be assessed against competencies at the Appraisal Review on an **individual** basis and have an **individual** Learning and Development Plan completed. The Assistant Director's consent is required for carrying out grouped appraisals and this should be obtained in advance.

**PERFORM** – Joint Assistant Directors should ensure that they use the appropriate long-term absence codes when entering appraisal details onto PERFORM. All appraisal and review dates will be maintained within the PERFORM system by managers.

### **FREQUENCY**

A meeting will be carried out after the individual has been in post for six months. Following this there will be an annual meeting, with a review every six months of performance against the action plan and the continuing

relevance of the plan itself. These are the minimum requirements. Additional reviews may be carried out where appropriate/necessary and many service areas conduct these supporting 1:1s.

## RECORDS/CONFIDENTIALITY

Records of the interviews will be treated in the strictest confidence and be retained on the employee's personal file in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Appraisal Meeting (Jan – March)	Appraisal Review Meeting (July - September)
Appraisal Preparation Form completed by Appraisee (Optional)	Appraisee and Appraiser complete self assessment of competencies individually
Review Performance Appraisal Plan for previous year noting outcomes. Discuss new objectives and how these link to Corporate/Service Plan Targets.	Review Performance Appraisal Plan for April to September of current year noting outcomes. Check progress towards objectives in next six months and review past 6 months
Review Learning and Development undertaken in previous year and complete relevant Post Learning and Development Evaluation Forms	Complete competency framework assessment
Complete Learning and Development Plan for current year	Review Learning and Development undertaken April to September of current year and complete relevant Post Learning and Development Evaluation Forms and submit to Joint Assistant Director to compile <b>Departmental Evaluation Report</b> . Joint Assistant Director to complete <b>by mid-January</b> and forward to HR and Payroll.
Review Job Description/Health & Safety Risk Assessment/Check employee being treated appropriately	Produce individual Learning and Development Plan for next year and submit to Joint Assistant Director.
Complete Appraisal Checklist Form to indicate the above actions have been completed and agree date of Appraisal Review  <b>Copy to be provided to Joint Assistant Director for entry into PERFORM</b>	Joint Assistant Director to compile <b>Departmental Learning and Development Plan</b> from all individual Appraisal Review Learning and Development Plans <b>by mid-January</b> and forward to HR and Payroll

Joint Assistant Director to enter Appraisal date in PERFORM	Complete Appraisal Review Checklist Form and agree date of next Appraisal Meeting (April-June). <b>Copy to be provided to Joint Assistant Director for entry into PERFORM</b>
Provide a signed copy of documents to appraisee. Appraiser to retain one copy.	Joint Assistant Director to enter Appraisal Review date in PERFORM
	Provide a copy of updated documentation to appraisee

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the scheme can be defined in terms of four main activities:

### Plan

- reviewing role requirements and how performance will be measured
- identifying learning and development needs to improve contribution
- identifying an action plan to meet any needs which have been highlighted through the Appraisal process

### Do

- encourage performance and provide support

### Review

- past performance
- assess and reviewing competencies

### Revise

- seek improvements where performance standards have not been achieved and make adjustments for next planning round as necessary

## AIMS

It has two main aims which are:

1. To support each employee to achieve a high standard of performance in the work which is necessary to enable their service to meet its own and the Council's priorities and objectives.
2. To identify employees' learning and development needs.

## KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Achievement of individual, team and corporate priorities.
2. Commitment to the process of performance improvement .
3. The system will not be linked to an employee's pay.
4. It will not be used as a tool for selecting employees for redundancy.
5. It will not be used to rate employees against one another.
6. It will be operated separately from any disciplinary process.

## **BENEFITS OF THE APPRAISAL AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW SCHEME**

A properly conducted Appraisal scheme benefits:

- the employee
- the manager
- the Council

In the following paragraphs, the benefits to each are explored.

Employees will benefit from the Appraisal scheme by having the opportunity to:

- understand more clearly what is expected in the job;
- find out how their manager views their work, receiving praise for jobs well done and receiving support and guidance for any areas which require improvement;
- be given the chance to contribute ideas and views as to how the service should operate;
- discuss any learning and development support they are likely to need;
- discuss and agree a learning and development plan if appropriate.

Managers conducting the reviews will benefit from the Appraisal scheme by gaining an opportunity to:

- review in detail the performance of members of the team
- assess learning, development and support needs
- understand how individuals perceive their own performance, learning and development needs
- understand individual's ambitions
- gain an overview of the balance of workload across the team
- uncover areas of confusion or overlap between members of the team
- realise constraints which inhibit employee performance
- understand how their management style contributes to the performance of their employees
- direct the work of members of the team by agreeing key objectives and how these will be met
- agree realistic learning and development opportunities with individuals
- agree any necessary updating of work programmes
- ensure equality in the treatment of employees
- encourage self assessment

The Council will benefit from the Appraisal scheme by gaining:

- improved performance from employees;
- improved motivation and job satisfaction on the part of employees;
- more accurate identification of training needs;
- better use of development opportunities in the workplace;

- greater prominence being given by all to learning and continuous improvement;
- improved opportunities being offered to groups that before have been under-represented in access to resources for training and development;
- an increased awareness of where both employee, team and organisation are going, need to go and how best to get there;
- improved quality of service given to public;
- better use of resources;
- better understanding between employees and their line manager.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Overview**

The Joint Chief Executive, Joint Directors and Joint Assistant Directors interview their Service Managers who, in turn, interview the staff that they line manage and so on. This gives managers experience of being reviewed before conducting meetings themselves and ensures that the objectives they set for their staff are in line with overall corporate objectives.

Across the Council there are a range of responsibilities for performance:

Members and Senior Managers are responsible for:

- endorsing the Appraisal scheme
- ensuring that resources are targeted
- cascading corporate visions, objectives and plans down to team and individual performance level
- linking the management of people's performance with service plans
- setting targets and monitoring performance
- regularly monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the Appraisal scheme
- auditing the management processes which underpin the scheme

Line Managers are responsible for:

- translating corporate, directorate and service objectives into personal targets
- agreeing job descriptions and targets with their teams
- conducting at least monthly one-to-one meetings with each employee
- undertaking regular discussion and formal appraisals with individuals on the achievement of objectives
- identifying learning, development and other support needs and determining priorities for meeting these
- encouraging staff discussion concerning career progression and personal progression and personal development
- ensuring that six-monthly reviews take place for all employees
- recognising and communicating achievements

- evaluating developmental activity and ensuring that training evaluation forms are completed

Employees are responsible for:

- checking that their individual objectives fit with Council, service and team objectives
- ensuring that their job meets service delivery needs and that any issues of concern are fed back to their manager
- regularly communicating with their manager
- identifying personal development needs and how to achieve them
- preparing for meetings
- participating in any training, learning, development and other support opportunities that are offered
- reflecting on how development opportunities have improved the way they work and that this learning is shared with others

## **EQUALITY IN EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT**

It is essential that managers treat all employees fairly and equitably in the employee development process.

As a mechanism for measuring performance, the process of Appraisal helps to identify employee development and training needs and other specific requirements to enable continuous satisfactory performance.

The Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity for its workforce and it is essential that each job-holder's performance is considered in an impartial and objective manner.

Managers must be particularly alert to the possibility of unintentional discrimination. This can occur when assumptions are made about the abilities, expectations and ambitions of employees, or when judgements are based on stereotypes rather than an individual's performance. This can prevent employees from being allowed the opportunity to develop to their full potential and as a result may have an adverse impact on the way we conduct our business.

It is recognised that individual employees have different needs. The meeting should identify the barriers to performance and development which stem from disadvantage or discrimination.

The appraisal meetings are, and should be, regarded as part of the normal managerial/supervisory role in terms of continuous monitoring of performance and agreeing objectives.

## **COMPETENCIES**

There are six competencies which are considered to be integral to the effective performance of all employees. There are also four competencies which are considered to be integral to the effective performance of those who have managerial or supervisory responsibilities. Appraisers and appraisees are asked to prepare for this section by identifying where the core skills have been effectively demonstrated and examples of where the core skill areas need improvement. Where areas for improvement are identified, agreement should be reached on how this improvement will be achieved. For example, this could be through a change in behaviour; formal training; coaching or further structured experience in the workplace (see 2.3). The competencies should be viewed in the context of the job requirements.

### **Employees will be assessed against the following 6 competencies**

- Communication (non-managerial)
- Performance
- Team Working
- Customer Service
- Personal Effectiveness
- Knowledge and Skills

### **Managers will be assessed against the following 10 competencies**

- Performance
- Team Working
- Customer Service
- Personal Effectiveness
- Knowledge and Skills
- Leadership and influence
- Strategic Planning
- Managerial
- Performance Management
- Communication

## **PROCEDURE**

The procedure has three distinct stages: preparation, meeting and follow-up. The term 'manager' is used to indicate the person responsible for conducting the appraisal meeting. The term does not relate directly to any job title. The reviewing manager will usually be the employee's line manager or supervisor.

### **Preparation**

Initially some training is needed to help the manager operate the scheme. The training takes place before an individual conducts an appraisal meeting.

For the meeting to be effective it is important that the manager and the employee take some time to prepare for the meeting.

### **For the Manager**

Arrange the meeting well in advance, giving reasonable notice to the employee of the meeting.

At this stage employees should also be given access to useful documentation such as records of past appraisal meetings, a copy of their current job description, relevant extracts from service plans, performance standards, Council's Corporate Plan and any other useful information.

### **For the Individual**

The employee should look back over the previous twelve months and consider achievements and any suggestions they might have for improving the way their work is done. The employee should also consider the future. The employee should complete Appendix A.

### **For Both**

1. Fix a mutually convenient time, allowing sufficient time for a relaxed, constructive meeting.
2. The manager and employee should each complete a preparation sheet prior to the meeting.

Appraisal is not about discussing current operational issues, which should be discussed as part of the normal day-to-day management process of the service. It is a review of key tasks and a process to identify learning and development needs. Long-term barriers to effective performance and working relationships are suitable topics for discussion.

### **The Meeting**

No manager will conduct an appraisal meeting without first undergoing appropriate training.

Anything that detracts from the main purpose of the meeting, or interrupts this, is to be avoided. It is, therefore, essential that sufficient time is set aside (usually a minimum of one hour), that a suitable venue is booked if necessary and that all telephone calls and callers are stopped.

The purpose of the meeting is to:-

- review the employee's current job description, identifying any variations between this and the actual work being carried out
- review the actual job being done - what is involved and how well it is being done, by looking at both strengths and areas for improvement
- identify any changes which could make the job more effective
- encourage the further development of the employee within their current job
- identify any training, development and support needs the employee may have

- draw up an action plan

An appraisal record form is to be completed after each meeting.

### **Action Plans**

These need to be realistic with definite timescales so as to be clear on who is going to do what, by when and how. Any goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. They also need individuals' commitment so it is worth spending time reaching agreed goals as opposed to the manager imposing these.

Setting achievable goals is not easy. Items need to be selected that will make a significant difference to performance. It is important to focus on behaviours or outcomes that can be measured, rather than personal qualities or approaches which are open to subjective interpretation. Both parties, when setting or reviewing performance, must be aware of the need to separate the influence of other people or external factors from individual effort.

Learning and development needs should relate to competencies. They should be categorised as:-

**Essential** - those which are necessary to improve performance or because of changes, such as a change in job, job content, technology, work systems or methods or any other circumstances which need to be addressed to ensure that performance and service delivery is acceptable.

**Desirable** - those which assist in career development or which would help with improved performance and personal development.

### **Disputes**

It is anticipated that disputes will be minimal, considering that the scheme relies on mutual respect and commitment to work amicably to resolve disagreements. However, it is recognised that there may be occasions when an employee feels dissatisfied with their treatment under the scheme, and in this case the matter will be dealt with under the Council's Grievance Procedure.

The appraisal process provides an opportunity to consider future career developments or personal aspirations for the year(s) ahead. The range of issues covered may vary; for some employees it might be their career aspirations for different roles within the Council, for others, who may be approaching a time when their pension becomes payable, it may cover where they see themselves working in the Council. The appraisee will not be held to anything which is said in this discussion; however, it does provide the opportunity to think about the longer term and succession planning. In summary:

<b>If the Appraisee .....</b>	<b>The Appraiser should.....</b>
Highlights specific career aspirations	Consider appraisee's learning and development needs and manage aspirations of Appraisee objectively
Highlights a wish to retire in the next 2 years	Inform HR of this intention.
Highlights a wish to retire at their Statutory Retirement Age, or at some point beyond their Statutory Retirement Age.	Inform Appraisee that they should give the relevant contractual notice as stated in their contract of employment.

### **Health and Safety**

The appraisal process provides an opportunity to review and agree the employee's individual Health and Safety Risk Assessment. Risk Assessments should not be viewed as a one off activity but an evolving document which should be reviewed on a regular basis or when the assessment may no longer be considered to be suitable and sufficient. Examples of when this may be necessary are:

- A change in the nature of the work;
- Introduction of new plant/ work equipment
- An increased appreciation of hazards and risks;
- Following an Accident/ incident
- Due to changes in the occupational capabilities of the individual.

### **Departmental Learning and Development Plans**

As well as agreeing individual Learning and Development Plans a Departmental Learning and Development Plan will be produced each year in April by the Joint Assistant Director. This will form part of the Service Plan and should further prioritise identified needs within the whole service. This is important for the equitable allocation of resources across the Council. Once completed a copy of this plan must be sent to the HR and Payroll Team.

On completion of the Appraisal process, using PERFORM, a record should be made that Appraisals are complete along with the date they were carried out. If you require help with this please contact Customer Service and Improvement Department.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The HR and Payroll Team are responsible for monitoring implementation of the Scheme and its effectiveness. The HR and Payroll Team, as part of the continuous monitoring of the Appraisal Scheme, will access a random sample of appraisal records for coverage, consistency and effective people management.