



Appraisal Scheme Policy

Purpose:

Performance appraisals are essential for the effective management and evaluation of staff. Appraisals help develop individuals, improve organisational performance and feed in to business planning.

Annual performance appraisals enable management and monitoring of standards, agreeing expectations and objectives, delegation of responsibilities and tasks, and career and succession planning – for individuals and the Council as a whole.

Performance appraisals are important for staff motivation, attitude and behaviour development, communicating and aligning individuals and Council aims, and fostering positive relationships between Councillors and staff.

Performance appraisals form part of the performance management of employees. The performance management system aims to improve performance, develop individuals and manage behaviour. Councillors are crucial in this system in ensuring that their staff members know and understand what is expected of them, they have the skills to undertake the role, that the Council will support their development, regular feedback is given on performance, and employees have the opportunity to contribute to the team aims and objectives.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees of the Council with the exception of casuals who work on an ad hoc basis, but are performance managed in other ways.

Appraisal Process:

Formal performance appraisals are conducted annually for all permanent staff in the Council, usually in December. The Parish Clerk is appraised by the Chair of the Council and any other staff are appraised by the Clerk. For the purposes of the Clerk's appraisal the Chair of the Council may wish to consult with other councillors for feedback about the Clerk's performance. For the purposes of other staff's appraisals the Clerk may wish to include the Chair of the Council or another Councillor provided this is mutually accepted by the member of staff and the Clerk.

The Council's aim is to have an appraisal process that is people, not paper driven and that aligns employee's development and skills to the Council's objectives.

Each member of staff will complete an appraisal form (as attached at Appendix A) and submit this to the Clerk by a pre-agreed time, in the case of the Clerk being the appraisee they shall submit their appraisal form to the Chair by a pre-agreed time. Staff and the Chair are issued with a guidance document on preparing for the appraisal meeting and the skills needed and techniques to get the most out of the appraisal process (as attached at Appendix B).

The Clerk shall begin the process of appraisal annually by completing their self-assessment section of the appraisal documentation (Appendix A) and submitting this to the Chair no later than the first week of October each year.

The Chair/Clerk will arrange an appraisal meeting at a suitable time and date, in a room free from distractions. The meeting will take the form of a free-flowing conversation during which a range of views is exchanged. This meeting should be held within the first 2 weeks of November each year and 7 clear days before a Personnel Committee meeting. The finalised appraisal documentation shall be submitted to the Chair of the Personnel Committee 7 clear days before the committee meets.

The Personnel Committee shall meet once the closing meeting of the appraisal process has been held in order to review the appraisal and making any recommendations to Full Council as a result of the finalised appraisal.

Key Elements of the Appraisal Process:

- **Measurement** – assessing performance against agreed targets and objectives, and behaviour and attitudes against espoused values;
- **Alignment** – with policies and strategic plans of the Council such as Parish Plans or Neighbourhood Plans.
- **Feedback** – providing information to individuals on their performance and progress and on what is required to continue to perform well in the future, particularly in view of any change programme and evolution of job roles;
- **Positive Reinforcement** – emphasising what has been done well and making only constructive criticism about what might be improved, and drawing out the importance of how things are done, as well as what is done, and ensuring effort is directed at value-adding activities;
- **Exchange of Views** – a frank exchange of views about what has happened, how appraisees can improve their performance, the support they need from their managers to achieve this and their aspirations for their future career;
- **Agreement** – jointly coming to an understanding by all parties about what needs to be done to improve and sustain performance generally and overcome any issues raised in the course of the discussion.

Follow Up:

After the meeting the appraisee will write up their appraisal form with notes from the meeting, showing their understanding of the conversation that has taken place. The form will detail the objectives set and timescales. The form is then agreed and signed off by both appraisee and appraiser.

It is important to remember that performance appraisals are not just a review of the staff member's ability to carry out and meet the needs of their role; it is a chance to look at personal development too, not just job specific development.

Training will be arranged in accordance with the Council's Training Policy and reviewed afterwards for effectiveness. Consideration of any incremental pay awards due will take into account performance of the employee against objectives and general performance when deciding if an incremental award will be made.

Both the appraisee and appraiser will be expected to review performance against objectives on an ongoing basis as part of the ongoing performance management of employees.

It is vital to remember that an appraisal process will be most effective when regular one-to-one discussions take place between Councillors and staff throughout the year.