



Appraisals Policy 48

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1. Purpose

Performance appraisals are essential for the effective management and evaluation of staff. Appraisals help develop individuals, improve organisational performance and feed into 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 management 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. Line managers are crucial in this system in ensuring that their team 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.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Council.

3. Appraisal Process

Formal performance appraisals are conducted annually for all permanent staff in the Council, usually in June. Each member of staff is appraised by their line manager. The Clerk is appraised by 2 members of the HR Committee.

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.

In order to be effective, it is important that both appraisee and appraiser are comfortable with and have bought in to the appraisal process and purpose. Technical training in conducting appraisal meetings will be made available to line managers or the aforementioned councillors should they wish to do so to ensure they have a good understanding with what is expected from them and their responsibilities as an appraiser.

Each member of staff will complete an appraisal form (as attached at Appendix A) and submit this to their line manager by a pre-agreed time.

The line manager 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.

Key Elements of the Appraisal Process:

- ♣ **Measurement** – assessing performance against agreed targets and objectives, and behaviour and attitudes against espoused values;
- ♣ **Alignment** – with Cuckfield Parish Council's Strategic Objectives and Aims (Business Plan);
- ♣ **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.

4. 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.

The Clerk will review all appraisals carried out and produce a report for the HR Committee with a generic overview of the appraisals and training needs identified.

Training will be arranged in accordance with the Council's Training & Development 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 managers and staff throughout the year. All line managers are provided with template one-to-one record sheets and are recommended to agree the frequency of said meetings with each individual staff member; some may feel weekly or bi-weekly best, others may agree monthly is sufficient. Completed one-to-one record sheets are held securely on the employee's personnel file.