

Employee Performance Management Policy and Procedure

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1	Sept 2007	Original version	
2	Sept 2012	Revised to incorporate procedure and make reference to new documentation for senior managers	
3	Jan 2015	Revised to incorporate new appraisal form for all staff, to introduce performance grades, and to refer to Enhanced Support Procedure	

This Policy is not for publication externally



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1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that the work performance and learning needs of every employee of West Berkshire Council are managed effectively and fairly.
- 1.2. The policy has been the subject of consultation with trade unions and representative heads of service, and has been approved by the Chief Executive and the Personnel Committee.

2. Applicability

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all non-school based employees working for the Council, including those working from home or at non-Council locations.
- 2.2. This policy does not apply to directly employed teachers, who are subject to a separate [teacher appraisal procedure](#).
- 2.3. It is the responsibility of each employee to familiarise themselves with and adhere to this policy.

3. Policy

- 3.1. The Council recognises that employees perform most effectively when they have clear expectations of their job role and purpose, their own targets or objectives, and of the wider aims of the service and the organisation.
- 3.2. The Council will ensure that every employee with a minimum of 12 months' service has a performance appraisal meeting at least once in every 12 months, at which previous performance and learning will be reviewed and targets for the future will be set.
- 3.3. The Council will ensure that managers meet employees on a regular basis to discuss progress towards targets set at the annual appraisal meeting, to discuss work programmes, and to raise any other work-related issues.
- 3.4. The Council will ensure that managers are appraised taking into account the relevant WBC leadership and management competency standards.
- 3.5. The Council will ensure that managers and employees have access to appropriate training and development to enable them to carry out their roles effectively with respect to employee performance management.
- 3.6. Underperformance of employees will be addressed, as appropriate, through;
 - 3.6.1. The Enhanced Support Procedure; or
 - 3.6.2. The Performance Capability Procedure.

4. Implementation

- 4.1. The policy will be implemented through procedures for appraisals and one-to-one meetings, with template documentation, and supported by mandatory training for all employees on employee performance management.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1. The overall responsibility for Employee Performance Management within WBC rests with the Chief Executive.
- 5.2. The Head of Human Resources is responsible for maintaining and reviewing this policy in line with changing legislation and codes of practice.
- 5.3. Heads of Service are responsible for;
- Achievement of corporate health indicators for appraisal;
 - Overseeing the development of staff within the service;
 - Contributing to corporate plans for staff training; and
 - Allocating their own training budgets fairly to meet development needs for staff in their service.
- 5.4. Managers are responsible for;
- Ensuring that new employees have work targets and objectives set as part of induction;
 - Appraising the performance of employees (with at least 12 months' service) at least once per year and assessing and grading performance against objectives and against the WBC competency framework standards;
 - Ensuring that appropriate learning and development activities are planned and available to employees to address learning needs identified during the appraisal process;
 - Meeting employees on a regular basis to review progress (one-to-one or supervision meetings); and
 - Entering into MyView the date of each annual appraisal they complete.
- 5.5. Employees are responsible for;
- Taking an active role in reviewing their own performance and target setting; and
 - Taking up learning and development opportunities and for managing their own learning.
- 5.6. Human Resources are responsible for;
- providing advice and guidance to managers on implementing the performance management policy;
 - ensuring that appropriate training and development is available for managers and employees; and
 - monitoring and reporting on appraisals against the corporate health indicator.

6. Failure to comply with the Employee Performance Management Policy

- 6.1. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to a lack of clarity over job role, learning needs or expected standards of performance, resulting in reduced effectiveness or efficiency, underperformance and putting service delivery at risk.
- 6.2. Compliance with the annual appraisal process is measured as a corporate health indicator.

7. Training

- 7.1. All managers and employees must attend training on appraisal and employee performance management as part of their induction. This should normally be by attendance at a one day classroom training course on the [Corporate training calendar](#) (booked via [MyView](#))
- 7.2. Refresher training should be undertaken every three years. This should normally be by [e-learning](#).

8. Annual Appraisal meeting

- 8.1. Every employee of WBC must meet his/her manager once a year to have an appraisal interview.
- 8.2. The purpose of the appraisal interview is to;
 - Review performance over the previous 12 months
 - Assess overall performance and allocate a performance grade of 1-5
 - Set performance targets/objectives for the next 12 months
 - Review learning and development needs and plan how to address them
- 8.3. The appraisal meeting may also be used to discuss career plans, including any plans for retirement.
- 8.4. Outcomes of the annual appraisal meeting must be recorded in writing and signed by the manager and employee. Appraisal record forms are available for;
 - Employees (not social care workers) ([corporate appraisal form](#))
 - Social care workers ([Social care workers appraisal form](#))
- 8.5. Each section of the form should be completed in full.

9. Reviewing and assessing performance at the appraisal meeting

- 9.1. The appraiser and appraisee should consider;
 - 9.1.1. the achievement of individual objectives set at the last appraisal;
 - 9.1.2. other significant achievements during the year;
 - 9.1.3. how these have been achieved;

9.1.4. how the employee has demonstrated the competencies expected of WBC employees and, where appropriate, WBC leaders and managers (see appendix);

9.1.5. learning and development, and how this has affected performance.

9.2. The appraiser will give the appraisee an overall performance grade. This grade should take account of how far the employee has met or exceeded his/her objectives for the past year, but should also take account of other aspects of performance, including demonstration of the expected competencies and learning and development, as follows;

9.3. Grades will be allocated as follows;

5 – Excellent performance

The employee has achieved or excelled on all his/her SMART objectives; achieved more outside those objectives; has improved his/her knowledge and skills; and has demonstrated competencies in line with the WBC framework.

4 – Good performance

The employee has achieved all of his/her objectives; has improved his/her knowledge and/or skills; and has demonstrated competencies in line with the WBC framework.

3 – Satisfactory performance

The employee has achieved most of his/her objectives including the most important; and has demonstrated competencies in line with the WBC framework.

2 – Underperformance

The employee has achieved some of his/her objectives but not the most important.

1 – Unsatisfactory performance

The employee has failed to meet most or all of his/her objectives and/or has failed to meet the minimum performance standards expected in the job role.

9.4. The impact of grades allocated at appraisal will be as follows;

9.4.1. An employee receiving performance grade of at least satisfactory (3, 4 or 5) will receive his/her annual increment if he/she is not already at the top of his/her grade.

9.4.2. A performance grade of 2 is a cause for concern. The employee will be placed on the Enhanced Support Procedure. There will be no incremental progression for the current year (i.e. from 1st April of the year on which the appraisal takes place). Incremental progression may begin again the following year, subject to a higher score, but there will be no double increment to make up for the lack of progression last year. However, if the manager judges that sufficient improvement has been made by the six-month review that the performance can be graded 3 or above, any withheld performance increment may be reinstated for the remainder of the year (i.e. for the period between the six-month review and next 31st March).

9.4.3. A performance grade of 1 is a cause of urgent and serious concern. The performance management/appraisal process will be suspended and the formal [Capability Procedure](#) will commence immediately. This may occur at the six month review or the annual appraisal. There will be no incremental progression until the Capability Procedure is concluded. The recommencement of incremental progression must be authorised by the Head of HR.

10. Setting objectives

10.1. Appraisal objectives should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. Additional guidance is available on [setting SMART appraisal targets](#) .

10.2. When setting objectives;

- For managers, these should include objectives related to the achievement of relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Corporate Health Indicators (CHIs);
- For all employees, consider the principles and priorities set out in the Council Strategy;
- Each objective should be rated High or Medium (identify no more than 3 or 4 with High importance) in order to ensure that work focuses on the priorities;
- New objectives may be added at the six month review meeting

10.3. Managers should consider how they will measure performance in the coming year. The criteria for measuring performance should be discussed and, if possible, agreed with the employee at the appraisal interview.

11. New employees

11.1. New employees should be set objectives as part of their induction (the relevant sections of the appraisal record form can be used to do this) and will have performance monitored under the Probationary Procedure during the first six months.

11.2. Employees who have transferred internally into a new post in the Council should be set objectives as part of their induction into the new role. Their performance should be managed under the Employee Performance Management Procedure

11.3. This information, together with the job description and work programme (where appropriate) will be used for the first appraisal which should take place in accordance with the appraisal timetable in the service.

11.4. The first appraisal should always take place within one year of the date of appointment.

12. Timing of appraisal

12.1. Appraisal interviews for senior managers should take place in March or April each year. This is to allow objectives for the following year to be linked to the Service, Directorate and Council Plans. This may only be varied where service planning is to a different timetable (e.g. in Education Services).

- 12.2. Appraisals for other employees should take place as soon as possible after senior manager appraisals have taken place.

13. Signing off the appraisal

- 13.1. The appraising manager should complete the Appraisal Form and provide a copy to the employee, normally no later than 10 working days after the appraisal meeting.
- 13.2. The employee should add his/her comments as required and return the Appraisal Form to the manager, normally within 10 working days. The manager should provide a copy to his/her manager.
- 13.3. The manager's manager should add comments as necessary before signing and returning the form to the appraising manager, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the form. Approval of the form includes approval of the objectives set for the appraisal.
- 13.4. The appraising manager should provide a copy of the final form to the employee and retain a copy for his/her records. Records should be kept according to the protocol in the service.

14. Self-assessment

- 14.1. Employees who are appraised should take time to reflect on their performance over the previous year. Employees should consider which objectives have been met and why; which objectives have not been met and why; how they have demonstrated the expected competencies; and evaluate the learning undertaken during the previous year.
- 14.2. The Appraisal Form has areas for appraisee comments at each stage. Employees may find it useful to complete these sections in draft before the appraisal meeting as part of their self-assessment. They may also find it helpful to provide a copy to their manager before the meeting to help facilitate discussion. However, this is not obligatory.

15. Using the WBC Competencies

- 15.1. The WBC Competency Framework Standards set out the behaviours which all employees are expected to demonstrate. Managers are expected to demonstrate additional competencies, as set out in the framework, which are important for effective performance as a manager within the Council.
- 15.2. The review of competencies can be used to support setting performance objectives and to identify areas for development.
- 15.3. Each service/team will have its own requirements and managers will need to interpret the competencies in the context of the individual job, the team and the service they work in.

16. One-to-one/supervision meetings

- 16.1. Managers should hold one-to-one meetings with all employees on a regular basis. It is recommended that meetings are held every four to six weeks (or within locally agreed time frames where appropriate).

- 16.2. In social care settings one-to-one meetings are replaced by 'supervision' meetings with a similar frequency. Separate guidance is available to ensure that supervision is carried out effectively to support service delivery standards and professional development.
- 16.3. Outcomes should be recorded by the manager in writing and countersigned by the employee. A model [one-to-one form](#) is available. A template supervision form is available for use in social care settings.

17. Six month review meetings

- 17.1. A meeting should normally be held to formally review progress against performance and learning objectives six months after the appraisal. The model appraisal form includes a column to record outcomes after six months.
- 17.2. The six month review is an opportunity to agree new performance and learning objectives if appropriate. An expanded 'one to one' meeting will be normally used to hold the six months review.
- 17.3. **Where there are significant changes or events within the year, that are outside the control of the individual, which affect the potential to achieve one or more objectives set at the start of the period, the objectives should be adjusted at the six-month review or at subsequent one-to-one meetings, as necessary.**
- 17.4. In services where detailed supervision sessions replace the regular one-to-one meetings it is not compulsory to hold an additional six month review.
- 17.5. In cases where the appraisal performance grade was 2, if the manager judges that sufficient improvement has been made by the six-month review that the performance can be graded 3 or above, any withheld performance increment may be reinstated for the remainder of the year (i.e. for the period between the six-month review and next 31st March).

18. Personal development plans

- 18.1. An important outcome of the appraisal interview is to record the learning objectives for the employee in the coming year. The model appraisal form includes a section to record the Personal Development Plan (PDP).
- 18.2. The manager should bring to the appraisal some ideas about the employee's learning needs derived from the Service, Directorate and Council Plans. This is called "top down" learning. The employee should bring to the appraisal some ideas about learning that is personal to his/her circumstances ("bottom up" learning).
- 18.3. The learning needs of employees identified in the PDPs should be summarised by the Head of Service and used to develop the service Learning and Development Plan.
- 18.4. Not all learning and development activities will attract a cost. However, services have limited training budgets and, where training needs are identified that require funding, training may have to be delayed, or alternative ways of development determined, depending on the cost, priority, and relevance to achieving service targets. The responsibility for making such decisions rests with the Head of Service.

19. Career aspirations

- 19.1. The appraisal is an opportunity to discuss wider career aspirations with an employee. The benefit of this discussion is to allow an experienced manager to offer advice on medium or longer term career issues to employees of all ages. It will also offer an opportunity for employees who are nearing the age where they may take their retirement pension to discuss plans for retirement or pre-retirement changes to work patterns (e.g. flexible retirement or part-time working).
- 19.2. No employee is compelled to discuss career/retirement aspirations with their manager if they choose not to. Any discussion that does take place should be of a supportive nature.

20. Job descriptions

- 20.1. The appraisal interview is a good time to discuss the relevance of the current job description. If managers do not review job descriptions at appraisal they should find another time in the year to do so (e.g. at an away day or service planning event).

21. 360° feedback

- 21.1. It can be useful for managers to be provided with feedback on performance and management style from those they manage and from their peers, as well as from more senior managers. This is known as 360 degree feedback, and is recommended particularly for senior managers (third tier¹ and above).
- 21.2. Advice should be sought from HR on gathering and using 360 feedback. A model [360 feedback form](#) is available.

¹ Third tier managers – all managers who report directly to a Head of Service

22. Summary of Employee Performance Management Cycle

<u>April/May</u> Appraisal meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review performance and learning over past 12 months and allocate performance grade• Set work programme, targets/objectives and standards for next 12 months• Agree learning and development objectives and opportunities for next 12 months
<u>Every 4-6 weeks</u> One-to-one (or supervision) meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss and set short term objectives and review progress on longer term objectives• Raise any other performance/attendance issues or employee concerns
<u>October/November</u> Six-month review meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review progress towards targets/objectives• Reset objectives and work programme as necessary• Review learning and development

23. Review of policy

- 23.1. This policy and procedure will be reviewed to respond to any changes and at least every three years.
- 23.2. The Human Resources Service is responsible for reviewing and maintaining this Policy.

Appendix – WBC framework standards for competencies

The following competencies are expected of all employees of West Berkshire Council.

Managers and leaders are also expected to display the competencies listed under 'leaders of people'.

	All employees	Leaders of people
When working with people	<p>Display respect for customers/clients/colleagues</p> <p>Work as part of a team to achieve goals</p> <p>Listen to other points of view</p> <p>Deliver a high standard of customer service</p> <p>Communicate effectively</p>	<p>Understand stakeholders' motivation and objectives</p> <p>Be a skilled influencer (communicate the vision and objectives, inspire and motivate, develop buy-in and trust)</p> <p>Expect, encourage and support high standards of performance from team members</p> <p>Use a range of leadership styles appropriate to individual team members and the situation</p> <p>Develop team working and a sense of common purpose; manage conflict</p>
When working with money and other assets	<p>Ensure value for money</p> <p>Adhere to Council financial procedures</p> <p>Use Council equipment with care</p> <p>Manage budgets responsibly</p> <p>Minimise waste</p>	<p>Evaluate priorities and keep them under review, adapting as required to ensure best use of resources</p> <p>Encourage creativity, continual improvement and efficiencies</p>
When making decisions	<p>Make prompt and fair decisions within his/her remit</p> <p>Assess risks appropriately</p> <p>Seek advice as needed</p> <p>Maintain records of decisions</p>	<p>Develop and empower team members to be able to make sound decisions (coaching)</p> <p>Be a decisive thinker (analyse data, information and problems, identify and evaluate options, make sound recommendations and decisions)</p> <p>Assess future requirements and priorities to inform decision making and service planning (change management, horizon scanning, SWOT, adaptable)</p> <p>Take and implement difficult and/or unpopular decisions where required</p> <p>Clearly communicate and promote decisions</p>
In relation to learning and development	<p>Learn continually through experience</p> <p>Seek opportunities to improve skills</p>	<p>Actively develop the team to meet current and future challenges</p>

	All employees	Leaders of people
	and understanding Coach and guide colleagues	Encourage team members to reflect on experience and learning; actively encourage transfer of learning Seek feedback on own performance to improve self awareness and own development needs
When using information and technology	Use Council systems effectively Safeguard sensitive and personal information	Seek improvement/efficiency through use of technology
When representing the Council	Maintain effective relationships with partners Display high standards of personal conduct	Develop an effective network both within and outside the Council Develop and maintain effective collaborative working both within the Council, and between organisations working in partnership
In their approach to work	Focus on priorities Work to the best of his/her ability Strive to deliver high standards Use initiative and seek creative solutions Display integrity and openness Ensure own personal safety and that of others in the workplace	Be a role model (demonstrating drive, purpose, integrity, fairness, enthusiasm, openness, resilience) Adapt to change, taking prompt and appropriate remedial action where required
When managing performance		Set/agree clear objectives, and quality and performance measures (for tasks and staff) Monitor and evaluate budgets, staff performance, and objectives Recognise good performance, and challenge underperformance and conduct