

People Framework

Performance Management Procedure



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Tracking

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Service			

Revision History

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Document Approvals

Each revision requires the following approvals:

Sponsor Approval		Name	Date

1. Planning Performance Management

There are 4 aspects to planning how to manage performance effectively. Managers must ensure they understand and translate the following into team and individual goals/ objectives based on the grade and role:

- Corporate Plan
- Service Plan
- Behaviour Framework
- Role Profile

Managers will discuss what areas are pertinent to individual teams and employees to achieve the goals, what standard is expected from them, explain how My Performance conversations will take place. Managers should identify training needs and discuss employee development needs, to support them to achieve goals and release potentials.

1.1 Objective Setting

- Where appropriate, managers should set individual performance objectives/ goals which relate to the overall objectives of the service area
- Where the above is not appropriate, overall performance will be reviewed against Council's behaviour framework and any task based activity
- Objectives/ goals set will be in line with the responsibility level and scope of work outlined in the employee's role profile
- Significant changes to goals / objectives and action plans should be discussed with the individual employee and confirmed as and when they arise
- Both manager and employee are responsible for monitoring progress on the agreed goals/objectives

1.2 Objectives can fall into the 3 types, as below:

- An objective relating to the role profile - This should help to ensure that individuals are performing to the requirements of their job which is outlined in their role profile.
- An objective relating to the service plan or team outcomes -This could be the same or similar for each member of a team carrying out the same work or working on the same project. The individual's specific contribution should be clear and measurable so it is important to consider how evidence of performance can be gathered.
- A personal development objective - The objective should be about demonstrating a behaviour, gaining particular skills or knowledge (which may take place in either formal or informal development or training) and using them to achieve an outcome by a particular date.

1.3 Reviewing performance

When reviewing performance, it is important to consider if the outcomes against the goals set, have or have not been achieved. The employee will have to demonstrate.

1.4 Performance Framework

The performance management cycle supports continued business success by guaranteeing that all employees are clear about their role in the organisation and are resourced, both in terms of training and development and management support, to make an optimum contribution.

1.5 **Managers will ensure:**

- That employees understand how their role and behaviour contributes to the successful accomplishment of the organisational objectives
- Clarity of purpose for employees
- Develop employees within a continuous improvement culture
- Encourage individuals to contribute to, and take ownership of, their own work goal/objectives and identified development
- Training and development needs of individuals are identified in order to achieve their performance goals / objectives and/or career development objectives
- Effective evaluation of the impact of training and development invested in individuals and teams
- Employees are provided with a clear and concise role profile upon commencement of their employment detailing their roles and responsibilities
- Regular My Performance Conversation meetings are held
- Constructive feedback, recognise achievement(s), encourage progress and raise concerns if any possible issues have been identified.

2. **Behaviour Framework**

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council should be a fulfilling and enjoyable place to work and in recognising the crucial role each and every employee plays in achieving this, the Council has a Behaviour Framework.

The behaviour framework is a set of core behaviours which define 'how' employees are expected to approach their work and sits alongside 'what' employees do, as outlined in the role profiles.

Behaviours demonstrate the attitudes and approach employees should take towards their and include:

- How we do things
- How we treat others
- What we say and how we say it
- How we expect to be treated

The framework details the behaviours and attitudes required by all employees and it supports the delivery of the service plans, corporate plan and culture.

By demonstrating the attitudes and behaviours, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will be an effective, positive and collaborative place to work.

The behaviour framework will help to celebrate achievements, talk about aspirations and express how employees would like to develop.

[Link to Behaviour Framework](#)

3. **My Performance Conversation**

The aim of My Performance Conversation is to build a foundation for team members to develop their performance to best achieve their potential to deliver better services and to create a culture at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council where team members perform well.

My Performance Conversation provides an opportunity for a two way conversation between manager and team member to discuss priorities, outcomes, achievements, barriers, obstacles and for team members to gain feedback on how they are doing on a regular basis. The aim of the performance conversation is to improve the overall performance of the Council with the focus of the conversation positive and motivational. The conversation should be open with a focus on learning from each other in order to support building great working relationships.

My Performance Conversations as a guide should include the following areas which team members can prepare for:

- Service Delivery
- Performance
- Development

Team members should prepare in advance for their meeting and be ready to discuss the key aspects of their work and performance.

The following gives some hints and tips around the shape of the conversation which team members can use to prepare for their meeting:

Service Delivery

How am I doing?

Review and clarify what I am expected to do in my role

What will success look like to me?

Discuss my priorities and key pieces of work and progress against them

What is going well for me?

What problems and challenges am I facing?

What ideas do I have to overcome these?

How can my manager and team support me?

What have our customer experiences been and what feedback have I received?

What can I do to update my priorities or a way of working as a result of feedback I have received?

Performance

What is my contribution?

What have I achieved?

How is my behaviour?

Is my attitude positive?

Are there aspects of my behaviour that could be challenging for colleagues?

Development

What areas do I need to develop?

What can I do to develop these area?

What opportunities can I seek to support my development?

How can my team develop?

What are my long term career aspirations?

What can I do to support these in my role at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council?

Team members should agree a suitable time with their manager free of interruption when the meeting can take place and prepare in advance to cover the above topics. Team Members should take the opportunity to feedback to their managers about what support they require and how they think their manager is doing.

Managers should approach My Performance Conversations with a coaching mind set, giving and receiving feedback, dealing directly with difficult issues and dealing with underperformance during the meetings. Feedback needs to be constructive and clear expectations set. The focus should be on improving and building the foundations of a successful team.

It is recognised that the Council has a varied workforce and My Performance Conversation will vary depending on the role a team member is undertaking. Managers have the autonomy to decide how often meetings should be conducted but as a guide they should be at least every 4-8 weeks and the attached template is provided as a guide to record My Performance Conversations should team members and managers choose to use it. The template can be adapted to hold the relevant discussion points. There must be a record of the meeting.

It will be the responsibility of team members, managers and Heads of Service to ensure that My Performance Conversations take place on a regular basis.

My Performance Conversation is a two-way process, where both the manager and the employee have the opportunity to raise items for discussion. This is a constructive and supportive tool to allow them to reflect on current work activity, any training or development needs and identify any issues or concerns at the earliest opportunity. This is a one to one meeting between the employee and manager. The following should be included:

- Any issues - particularly concerning any issues affecting performance or any training needs
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and
- Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness
- Receive constructive feedback on their work performance
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Discuss career progression if employee would like to progress
- Document any issues raised

3.1 **The benefits of My Performance Conversation are:**

- Improved communication with employees
- Problems identified at the earliest opportunity
- Faster more effective solutions to any problems and concerns
- Improved time management due to reduced 'ad hoc' discussions/meetings
- Written records of discussions/meetings where issues have been raised

Note taking - My Performance Conversation form should be used to facilitate discussions and taking notes which must be signed and dated where performance issues are raised. Taking notes of meetings is essential as these can be used to review performance improvement in informal meetings or can be referred to if required, in formal meetings. It is important for the notes to be dated and signed to avoid any kind of contradictions or denial of facts or information that may arise if used in formal stages.

My Performance Conversation meetings must be used to undertake performance management throughout the year. My Performance Conversations will provide an opportunity to:

- Review level of performance against goals/objectives set
- Assess personal skills or any development required and how this will be achieved.
- Discuss progress for each goal /objective based on current documented evidence. Has the goal/objective been met or is it on track to be met?
- Establish if a goal/objective which is still relevant has not been met, note the reasons why and consider whether additional support is necessary and, if it is, what kind of support
- Discuss evidence and assessment of how they have approached their work against the Council's Behaviour Framework
- Refine any objectives/ goals which are no longer relevant i.e. circumstances can change, so this may mean that objectives will need to be amended or discarded/replaced if they become no longer relevant

4. **Role of Managers**

The success of a performance management system rests largely on managers, although employees are encouraged to fully prepare for their MPC and are contracted to fulfil their responsibilities performing at an expected standard. Managers will:

- Agree skills and behaviours necessary for employees to fulfil their roles and responsibilities
- Agree goals / objectives and development needs with their employees
- Review employee performance against goals/ objectives and behaviours throughout the year via My Performance Conversation process
- Give constructive feedback and discuss any changes to tasks or goals where circumstances change
- Discuss a personal development plan and identify training needs
- Help employees to achieve goals / objectives through coaching
- Provide access to training or other development opportunities
- Manage underperformance

- Take notes of all discussions on My Performance Conversations where issues or underperformance is discussed
- Consult with HR where performance issues have been identified

5. Performance Issues

Performance issues can arise for the following reasons (although not exhaustive):

- Unsatisfactory work performance e.g. consistent / repeated failure to meet deadlines/ objectives or identify problems and offer solutions
- Inability to demonstrate the level of skill or competence required for the position
- Unsatisfactory attitude or behaviour
- Poor quality of work
- Loss of qualification essential to role
- Health problems preventing the employee from attending work or carrying out the full range of duties expected of their role

Regular reviews and support will help minimise underperformance. Nevertheless there may be occasions when, despite adequate support, an employee's performance consistently fails to reach the required standard. Where this is the case managers must try to resolve the issue. Managers must be prepared and ready to have difficult conversations with their team members and will need to have been trained to do so. (Refer to Performance Management Guidance document for further information).

If the reasons behind the performance problems are unclear, managers should contact HR for advice about the appropriate guidance/procedure.

The performance management procedure should not be used where employees are capable of carrying out their work satisfactorily but are neglecting to do so. In these cases, the Disciplinary policy should be considered. For performance issues relating to Ill Health, the Capability Policy should be used.

6. Managing Early Signs of Underperformance

Discussing areas of performance which require improvement should be seen as an integral part of My Performance Conversations as recognising success. If an employee is not meeting some expectations of the role profile this must be addressed as part of the individual's ongoing development with a view to establishing any underlying reason/s. All discussions must be handled sensitively, recorded accurately and shared with the employees. Managers will consult HR as appropriate if the concerns are serious

Managers and employees both have a responsibility to identify gaps in performance and to work together on closing those gaps by applying various methods e.g. coaching, training. For My Performance Conversation meetings both the manager and the employee should take time to prepare, be responsible for identifying areas of the role which are not on track, or could have been tackled differently, and what action is required (e.g. informal performance improvement plan or a referral to OH for reasonable adjustments).

Managers will ensure that any such concerns are addressed and resolved at an informal stage, giving the employee the opportunity to discuss any matter openly and honestly. They must ensure employees are supported appropriately to improve performance.

The employee will be expected to be proactive and develop themselves and improve their performance alongside any additional guidance and coaching they will receive, fully co-operating with their line managers.

Managers will explain that continuing underperformance may lead to invoking Capability procedure. [LINK TO CAPABILITY PROCEDURE](#).

7. Discussing Underperformance

Discussions addressing underperformance may include the following:

- In what ways are the standards of the role not being met?
- Are the expectations and standards reasonable and achievable?
- What are the consequences of deliverables/standards/Behaviours not being met?
- What are the reasons for the poor performance (e.g. gaps in skills, knowledge, unclear or unreasonable expectations, personal difficulties etc.)
- What measures will be put in place to help improve performance?
- What improvement is expected and by when?

Managers should always prepare carefully for meetings where constructive feedback will be given. Managers may want to refer to the 'Giving and Receiving Feedback' guide (Annex 2 – Capability Guidance) as part of their preparation and to take further advice from HR as appropriate.

Managers should consider, with advice from HR, discussing an informal action plan to help improve under performance within a stipulated time scale.

Managers must take appropriate action when:

- An employee's under performance is not improving after a period of careful monitoring
- There is a sudden deterioration in their performance standard

Managers should discuss the case with HR, if they have not already done so, review if any action taken so far and agree what strategies should be put in place to bring about the improvement required, as quickly as possible.

Managers must seek appropriate advice from HR in using the relevant policy (e.g. Capability or Disciplinary) in order to manage the case fairly, consistently and effectively.

8. Learning and Development

As a part of the performance management process, managers and employees will take part in identifying and agreeing learning and development needs.

Managers can:

- Ensure that the necessary opportunities are made available to the employee to enable them to develop appropriate skills and knowledge to undertake their current role
- Ensure that the employee has access to other opportunities so as to equip them to undertake their role as an effective team member
- Encourage all employees to contribute to the identification of their personal development and learning needs

Any training needs identified as a part of performance improvement plan due to underperformance, must be made available to the employee and reviewed in line with the policy.

Managers will monitor the areas for learning and development as part of performance management via My Performance Conversation.

A range of learning and development activities may include:

- Learning in the job
- Work experience
- Team work
- Self-development

An employee may wish to identify job related learning opportunities for their own career development. It may also be possible that an individual is performing well in their role and does not consider themselves to have any development needs or further career aspirations. This can be taken into consideration in My Performance Conversation and agreed with the employee (e.g. where they can demonstrate that they are keeping up to date with any changes or new developments in relation to their work).

9. Formal Action

Managers must informally discuss underperformance setting realistic goals / objectives within a stipulated review period, providing support where it has been discussed and agreed. Continued underperformance and where goals / objectives have not been met, it will be escalated to the formal stages of Capability Procedure depending on each case. HR advice will be required to ensure consistency and fairness.

Managers will consider the following prior to progressing to the formal stages of the Capability procedure:

- Has it been made clear to the individual what the gaps are in their performance?
- Has it been made clear in a written record what improvement is expected and by when?
- What action has the manager and the individual already taken to address the under-performance?
- What are the consequences of the individual's continuing poor performance?

Managers must consult HR and ensure they have considered all options providing all the support agreed before escalating to a formal stage unless the level of performance is believed not to be improving despite all measures put into place.

10. Underperformance and Annual Pay Progression

A recommendation for annual progression will be made in recognition of sustained performance throughout the year. The assessment will be made by the manager via regular My Performance Conversations taking into consideration the employee's performance throughout the year. Managers will apply the performance management process, considering the different categories of contract or employees or situation including reviewing performance for employee/s who is/are absent due to maternity or any disability reason (e.g. Seconded or FTC etc.) in line with the policy.

Managers will inform HR of the nominations and send any supporting documents to HR to evidence where an employee has been under-performing and will not be recommended for pay progression. Managers must submit the My Performance Conversation (12 months) documents to evidence under performance of those who should not be awarded annual progression.

Employees who are consistently underperforming in areas of service delivery, behaviour and attitude, attendance and those that are subject to formal disciplinary or capability processes will not be eligible for annual progression.

Where employees are not meeting the required standards, this should be clearly stated by the manager during My Performance Conversation meetings. Employees should be advised in advance that their performance isn't acceptable and that continuing under performance may affect their ability to receive annual progression. Managers should consider referring to the Council's Capability Policy and take appropriate action in line with this policy if necessary with advice from HR.

11. Right of Appeal

Employees who have not been recommended for annual progression award have a right to appeal.

Appeals should be in writing, addressed to the Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development and should be received within 7 working days from when the employee has received the written confirmation that no annual progression has been awarded. Employees must clearly state the grounds of their appeal (e.g. why they disagree and an explanation or any supporting evidence outlining their reasons).

An appeal meeting will be arranged to take place within 7 working days of the submission of the written appeal, wherever possible. Should it take any longer to arrange the meeting due to any unavoidable circumstance, every effort will be made to meet the timescale and the employee will be notified if this is not possible. Employees must attend the meeting at the specified time.

If they are unable to attend due to circumstances beyond their control, they should inform their line manager immediately. Failure to attend without any valid reason or if it appears that they have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the hearing may

take place in their absence. The appeal hearing will be conducted by the Head of Service or Chief Officer. They will consider the grounds put forward and assess whether or not the conclusion reached by the manager was appropriate. The employee will be informed of the outcome within 7 working days, wherever possible. The outcome of this meeting will be final.

12. Dismissal

Employees can be dismissed on grounds of lack of capability and an inability to improve.