

Wilton Town Council – Performance and Development Policy

1. Introduction

Performance and Development Reviews covering all employees are delivered on an annual basis.

The purpose of the Performance and Development Review process is:

- to ensure that Wilton Town Council has the right skills in the right place at the right time and to the required capacity to deliver services to agreed standards;
- to develop and support all employees to do their job well to deliver the Council's priorities for the benefit of customers and the community;
- to ensure that Wilton Town Council delivers effective and efficient services;
- to maximise the capacity, resilience and flexibility of staff and resources to deliver the Council's key priorities;
- to develop and retain professional skills through further development of career pathways.

2. Policy

Appraisers must ensure that all processes are fair and equitable for all staff members and that they are applied in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and Guidance.

Formal disciplinary and grievance issues are not to be part of any performance and development review procedure and will be dealt with separately.

The electronic, audio or video recording by any device of performance and development review meetings will not be permitted.

This policy aims to create a management framework to ensure that all employees:

- Have an annual face to face performance and development review meeting.
- Receive regular meetings with their line manager to discuss their performance during the year and discuss work activity, learning and development.
- Know what is expected of them in terms of the standard of their performance from the beginning of their employment.
- Will have an initial appraisal shortly after starting their employment or new post.
- Are made aware of any areas in their work which are not to the required standard.
- Receive recognition for their achievements.
- Identify their learning and development needs and aspirations in a development plan.
- Can identify skills and knowledge development needs.

3. New starters

All new employees will be set objectives in their initial performance and development appraisal. These objectives will be monitored over the first 6 months of their employment through the probation period.

4. Temporary and fixed term contracts

All employees on temporary and fixed term contracts will be set objectives and a development plan which will be reviewed through performance and development review meetings and which will be appropriate to the length of their employment. Where possible performance and development review meetings will be aligned to the normal appraisal year to ensure consistency with permanent employees.

5. Mitigating Circumstances

There may be occasions where an employee is unable to achieve an objective(s) they have been set due to issues outside of their control. Appraisers need to take this into consideration.

Performance and Development Reviews - Core Principles

6. General

- All employees will be given a performance and development review form to complete ten days prior to the review.
- All employees will take part in a formal annual performance and development review process.
- The Town Clerk will be appraised by a panel as resolved by council.
- All staff will be appraised by their Line Manager.

7. Objective setting

- Objectives set will be in line with the responsibility level and scope of work outlined in the staff member's current, up to date job description.
- Significant changes to objectives and action plans should be discussed with the individual employee and confirmed as and when they arise.
- Consistency of objectives set must be demonstrated.

8. Confidentiality

The appraisal document will remain confidential between the staff member, the appraiser(s) and the Town Council as the corporate body.

9. Support

Appraisers will ensure that they ask the appraisee if they need any additional support or equipment in order to perform their role effectively. This may be ICT equipment, flexible working arrangements or whether any reasonable adjustments are needed or are still appropriate, if already in place, to support a disability.

10. Outcome

Training requirements will be considered as part of the training programme which will be presented to Full Council for consideration.

11. Performance and Development Review Records

A record of all performance and development review meetings will be kept in a secure location in accordance with GDPR guidelines.

12. Performance Improvement Procedure

It is in everybody's interest for employees to perform well at their jobs and the Council aims to ensure that all employees are given the support needed to ensure that they do so. Where there are issues with performance then the employee should receive feedback from their manager setting out any concerns. Discussions should take place about how that performance can be improved. This procedure is designed to be used when such informal discussions do not lead to the employee's performance improving to an acceptable level.

Where an employee's poor performance is believed to be the result of deliberate neglect, or where serious errors have been made to the detriment of the Council then it may be more appropriate to use the disciplinary procedure. Which procedure to use shall be at the discretion of the Council.

The Council also reserves the right not to follow this procedure in full for employees who are within their first two years of employment with the Council.

13. The Right to be Accompanied

Employees are entitled to be accompanied at any formal meeting held under this procedure by a fellow employee or trade union official of their choice. The Council will provide any chosen companions with appropriate paid time off to allow them to attend the meeting. It is, however, up to the employee in question to arrange for a companion to attend the meeting.

If your chosen companion cannot attend on the day scheduled for the meeting then the Council will agree a new date. This will usually be within 5 working days of the date originally scheduled. If your companion is not available within that timescale then you may need to find someone else to take their place.

The Companion's role is to advise you during the meeting and make representations on your behalf. However, both you and your companion are required to cooperate in ensuring a fair and efficient meeting. The companion is not entitled to answer questions on your behalf.

14. Stage One

The employee's line manager will inform them of the nature of the problem and confirm this in writing. The employee will be invited to a formal performance management hearing to discuss the issues raised by the manager's concerns. The invitation will set out the respects in which the employee's manager believes that the employee's performance still falls short of an acceptable standard. The hearing will be conducted by the employee's line manager and will consider any representations the employee may make about their performance, whether it needs to be improved, and if so what steps can be taken to help the employee reach the appropriate level.

Following discussion of the problem, the line manager may choose to take no further action; to refer the matter for investigation under the disciplinary procedure (if it appears the issues are linked to conduct rather than performance) or to issue a **written warning** and Performance Improvement Plan which will remain current for a period of 12 months.

15. Performance Improvement Plan

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is a series of measures designed to help improve the employee's performance. Each measure will ideally be agreed with the employee, though the Council reserves the right to insist on any aspect of the PIP in the absence of such agreement.

Each PIP will be tailored to the particular situation, but will contain the following elements:

Timescale: the overall timescale in which the necessary improvement must be achieved will be set out, together with the timescale for reaching individual milestones where appropriate.

Targets: The PIP will specify the particular areas in which improvement is needed and set out how and on what criteria the employee's performance will be assessed. Where appropriate, specific targets will be set which will need to be achieved either by the end of the plan or at identifiable stages within it.

Measures: The PIP will specify what measures will be taken by the Council to support the employee in improving their performance. Such measures may include training, additional supervision, the reallocation of other duties, or the provision of additional support from colleagues.

Feedback: As part of the PIP the employee will be given regular feedback from their line manager indicating the extent to which the employee is on track to deliver the improvements set out in the plan

If at any stage the Council feels that the PIP is not progressing in a satisfactory way, a further meeting may be held with the employee to discuss the issue. As a result of such a meeting the employer may amend or extend any part of the plan.

16. Review

At the end of the PIP the employee's performance will be reviewed. If satisfactory progress has been made the employee will be notified of this fact in writing. If the manager feels that progress has been insufficient then they may decide to extend and/or amend the PIP to such extent as seems appropriate. Alternatively the manager may refer the matter to a meeting under Stage Two of this procedure.

Following the successful completion of a PIP the employee's performance will continue to be monitored. If at any stage during the lifetime of the first written warning the employee's performance again starts to fall short of an acceptable standard, their line manager may decide to institute stage two of this procedure.

17. Stage Two

If a PIP has not led to sufficient improvement in the employee's performance, the employee will be invited to attend a formal performance management hearing. The invitation will set out the respects in which the line manager believes that the employee's performance still falls short of an acceptable standard.

The hearing will be conducted by a member of the senior management team.

At the hearing, the employee will be given an opportunity to respond to any criticism of their performance and to make representations about any aspect of the way in which the process has been managed.

If the hearing concludes that reasonable steps have been taken which should have allowed the employee to perform to an acceptable standard but that these measures have not worked then a **formal final warning** may be issued. The warning will explain the nature of the improvement which is required in the employee's performance and state that the improvement must be immediate and sustained. It will also explain that if this improvement does not take place then the employee may be dismissed. Where it is appropriate, the warning may be accompanied by an extended or revised PIP.

The warning will remain current for a period of 12 months, after which time it will cease to have effect.

18. Stage Three

If an employee has been issued with a warning under Stage Two which remains current, and the appropriate manager believes that the employee's performance is still not acceptable then the matter may be referred to a further performance management hearing.

The employee will be informed in writing of the grounds of which the hearing is being convened and in particular will be told of the respects in which their performance continues to fall below an acceptable standard.

The hearing will be conducted by an appropriate manager.

At the meeting the employee will be able to respond to any criticisms made of their performance and make representations about how the situation should be treated.

The manager conducting the meeting may take such action as is judged appropriate up to and including a decision to dismiss the employee.

Any dismissal under this procedure will be with notice or payment in lieu of notice and the decision to dismiss together with the reasons for dismissal will be set out in writing and sent to the employee.

19. Appeals

An employee may appeal against any decision taken under this procedure. The appeal should be submitted in writing stating your full grounds of appeal within one week of the decision being communicated. An appeal

hearing will then be convened to consider the matter. Any PIP that is in force, together with any measures or objectives included within it, will continue in place during the appeal process.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to the employee in writing explaining the grounds of which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

20.Redeployment

There may be circumstances in which it becomes clear that an employee would be better suited to a different role within the Council. However, any offer to redeploy the employee will be entirely at the Council's discretion and will only be made when the Council is confident that the employee will be able to perform well in the redeployed role and where there is a suitable available vacancy.

Redeployment may be offered as an alternative to dismissal where the Council is satisfied that the employee should no longer be allowed to continue to work in their current role. While the employee is free to refuse any offer of redeployment, the only alternative available in these circumstances will usually be dismissal.