

CLERK APPRAISAL

The aim of this appraisal is to provide an effective and efficient service and a satisfactory working environment affording job satisfaction for the clerk.

Once the clerk's probationary period is complete, they must continue to have the opportunity to discuss their performance with the staffing committee Chairman or another Councillor as agreed.

It is helpful if the clerk/councillors inform each other of items each wish to raise in advance of the review.

Key features

An appraisal should take into consideration the following factors:

- 1. Openness** – An appraisal should be open from both parties' perspective, and the clerk should be privy to all comments made during the appraisal process.
- 2. Confidentiality** – The Staffing Committee/council and the clerk only will normally see the appraisal record. The fact that the appraisal has taken place should be reported to the council, but all details are kept confidential.
- 3. Consistency** – the same scheme of appraisal should be used every year to enable a comparison across timescales.
- 4. Objectives** – Objectives which are set during the appraisal should be objective and understood by both the Staffing Committee or council and the clerk, and be based on actual conduct and performance rather than personalities or subjective criteria.
- 5. Forward Looking** – the main value of reviewing past performance is to identify matters which can be built upon, problems that can be tackled by the council or by training, and new opportunities.
- 6. Positive** – Problems, difficulties and mistakes should be discussed openly so that solutions can be found, training offered or defective systems improved.
- 7. Two-way Conversation** – appraisees are encouraged to contribute frankly in assessing their performance and goals.
- 8. No surprises** – it is poor practice to introduce new information, particularly of a critical nature at an appraisal meeting. If there are issues with conduct or performance, they should be raised with the clerk at the time they occur, not held back to handle at an appraisal session.

The following aspects should be considered:

- Quality of work, accuracy and detail, ability to work under pressure, dependability and timekeeping, job knowledge and professionalism.
- Knowledge of the council, work planning and the effective use of time, problem solving and decision-making, flexibility, adaptability, initiative and innovation. Communication and interpersonal skills, teamwork and achievement of targets.
- The Chairman of the Staffing Committee/council will carry out the appraisal, or another Councillor as agreed.

The Chairman of the Staffing Committee/council will be responsible for typing up the notes of the appraisal report which will record the discussions that took place at the meeting. It will be given to the clerk for any comments and return.

Completed appraisal reports will be one of the mechanisms considered by the Council when determining whether a salary increase should be awarded.

The Chairman of the Committee/council will report back to the full council.

Substance of the Appraisal

1. Targets set from the previous year will be reviewed.

2. Joint review of performance evidence –

- a) which aspects of the job have been accomplished well?
- b) In which aspects of the job could the clerk have performed better?
- c) What influences have made the job difficult to perform?
- d) What strengths does the clerk bring to the job?
- e) What are the goals for the next review period?
- f) What training and development would help to achieve these goals?
- g) What skills and knowledge, relevant to the role or career aspirations would the clerk like to gain in the future?
- h) What improvements to the council can the clerk suggest?

3. Discussion of achievements and concerns -

a) Any deficiencies or unsatisfactory performances noted will result in an action plan agreed between the clerk and the Staffing Committee/council.

b) Continuing deficiencies or unsatisfactory performance will result in a review of the clerk's competence to carry out their particular type of work. It may be appropriate for such discussions to lead to a separate disciplinary process for poor performance, but a disciplinary sanction is not an automatic outcome from a poor appraisal.

4. Review of job description (if applicable) – does the current job description adequately reflect the job the clerk is actually being asked to do? Are there changes required? If so, is this the right point to be making these observations?

5. Setting objectives (6 – 8 maximum and include 1 personal development objective) - Objectives provide framework for the coming year's work. They should be agreed between the clerk and the Staffing Committee/council. They need to reflect the clerk's job description and the council's own objectives derived from its strategic and business plans.

a) Training and development

The clerk and the Staffing Committee/council should jointly identify training needs. Concentrate first on the areas of skill and knowledge needing development, and only after that, on training solutions. Recommendations should relate to needs identified in reviewing past performance and/or to new objectives or additional responsibilities.

6. Summary and agreement- Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bounded).

1. **Specific:** the objective should refer to a particular task or piece of work or specific aspects of behaviour or performance.

2. **Measurable:** There should be measures (qualitative or quantitative) which are clearly agreed and understood. These will enable progress and achievement to be monitored and recognised.

3. **Agreed:** the objective should be agreed by the clerk and the Staffing Committee/council.

4. **Realistic:** The objective should be designed to be challenging for the clerk but should not be so demanding that there is a high chance of failure.

5. **Timed:** All objectives should have a date by which they should be achieved.

There are 3 steps in setting effective objectives:

1. Select the part of the job to which the objective will relate
2. Agree what is the end result to be achieved within that area
3. Settle how the end result will be achieved and the steps that the clerk will need to take: these are standards of performance.

The results of the appraisal process will be recorded on a Performance Appraisal form. A copy of the form will be kept by both appraisers and clerk.

CLERK APPRAISAL FORM

Section 1 – Clerk to complete this section

*(Use your job description and previously agreed objectives to complete this section of the form.
Please review your job description to ensure continued relevance)*

Name: Jenny Rice

Post: Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

Date appointed to current Job:

1. Performance Over the Review Year

1.1 How would you describe your overall performance in the past twelve months?

1.2 Which parts of your job have you performed most effectively?

1.3 Which parts of your job have not gone so well?

1.4 State any part of your job description that you are not doing.

1.5 State any areas of work which are **not** in your job description.

2. Your Skills and Expertise

2.1 What are your key strengths in your job?

2.2 What additional skills and expertise have you gained over the period?

2.3 Do you possess skills and strengths not fully used in your job?

3 Development Needs

3.1 What parts of your job do you find most difficult and why do you find them difficult?

3.2 Has a lack of a particular experience or skill affected your performance?

3.3 What additional training have you undertaken during the review period?

3.4 How effective has this training been?

3.5 What additional training or experience would now be of benefit to help you achieve future targets/objectives?

4. Objective/Target Setting

(Use your job description and any Council's aims and objectives to consider what you intend to achieve next year)

4.1 What potential individual objectives/targets do you want to discuss with your appraiser?

4.2 What potential objectives/targets have high priority?

4.3 Describe any particular help and/or support you feel you need to achieve your objectives/targets.

Section 2: Staffing Committee/council to complete this section

Assessment could be marked as follows:

- A – Well above the performance expected
- B – Consistently above the standard of the grade
- C – Generally achieves the acceptable standard of the grade
- D – Meets all the requirements of the job
- E – Not quite up to an acceptable standard
- F – Consistently below the acceptable standard
- G – Performance well below the accepted level

Name(s)

Date of Appraisal:

Period Covered From: To:

Consider what the clerk has written in Section 1 and make comments in this section (Section 2). When you have completed the appraisal interview and agreed objectives, training and development plans the overall summary and plans for the following year should be summarised in Section 3. You should obtain the employee's comments and signature in Section 4 and give the employee a copy of the full document for their records.

1. Agreed Objectives (although there are no set number of objectives those set should cover key aspects of the employee's job and have direct relevance to any Council aims and objectives).

1.

2

3

4.

5.

2. Comments

2.1 Comment on identified main achievements (add anything else that was done particularly well)

2.2 Comment on work or anything else which has not gone well

2.3 Comment on any tasks that should no longer be in the job description and any that should be included

2.4 Give your overall assessment of the employee's performance during the last twelve months (include strengths, weaknesses and any constraints to their work and the outcome of specific agreed objectives).

Section 3: Future plans

(this section provides an opportunity to record objectives for the coming year, agree training/development plans)

1. Agreed Objectives (although there are no set number of objectives those set should cover key aspects of the clerk's job and have direct relevance to any Council aims and objectives.

1.

2

3

4.

5.

2. Training/Development actions

Section 4: Clerk comments

(This section provides space for the clerk to comment on the completed form and the appraisal process)

Signature of Clerk _____

Signature(s) of Staffing Committee/council chairman _____

Date _____