

APPRAISAL SCHEME GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

The appraisal scheme provides the Council with a framework to regularly review an employee's performance, and the employees with an opportunity to give feedback to their employer.

WHO SHOULD UNDERTAKE APPRAISALS?

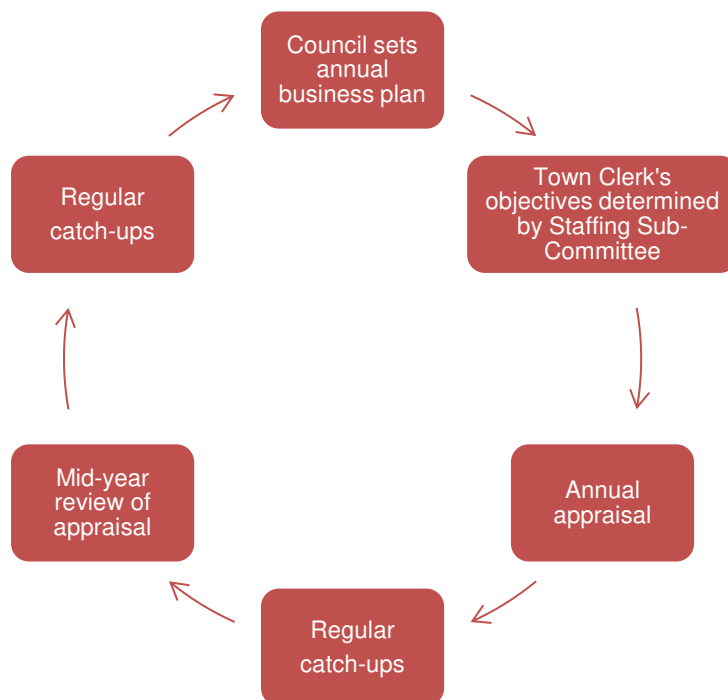
The Town Clerk will usually appraise those who report directly to the Town Clerk. Managers who report to the Town Clerk would usually appraise the staff reporting to them and share the reports from these appraisals with the Town Clerk.

The Staffing Committee will appoint a small Appraisal Panel (2 or 3) from within its number to appraise the Town Clerk.

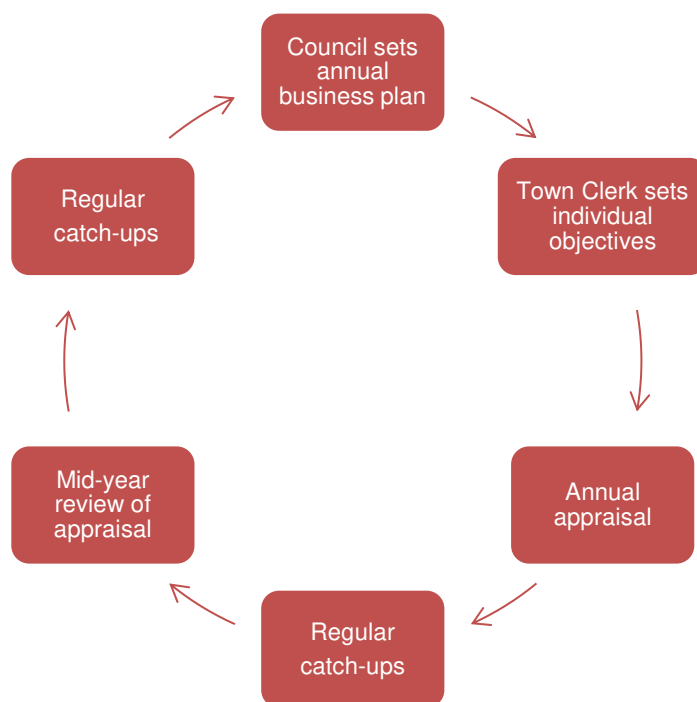
APPRAISALS AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Appraisals are an important part of the performance management process. Due to the nature of the Council's management structure, the appraisal process for the Town Clerk differs to that of other staff.

The performance management process for the Clerk



The performance management process for other staff



CORE ASPECTS OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The Council's Business Plan

The Plan sets the Council's objectives for the next year. These objectives can be part of longer term aims.

The Role of the Staffing Committee

The Staffing Committee will:

- ensure that annual appraisals are being conducted for all staff;
- appoint the Appraisal Panel to undertake the Town Clerk's appraisal;
- be responsible for reviewing the performance management process to ensure it continues to meet the Council's needs;
- The Chair of the Staffing Committee will countersign the appraisals for all staff, reporting any areas of concern to the committee for consideration; and
- will hear any grievances raised by staff in relation to their appraisal. *

*subject to compliance with the ACAS Code of Practice on the conduct of grievance procedures

The Annual Appraisal and Mid-Year Review

The annual appraisal and mid-year reviews and catch-up meetings will follow the format set out in this document with supporting forms for the annual and mid-year reviews.

The Role of Regular Catch-Ups

Catch-ups should be conducted every six weeks or so. Meetings may be more frequent where staff are new to their post, the employee requires more regular support or, the manager is concerned that the employee needs particular attention. Equally catch-ups can take place less frequently where appropriate. However, they should always take place at least every 8 weeks/2 months.

Catch-ups provide the opportunity for regular discussions on progress against objectives highlighting where additional support may be needed or, in exceptional situations, where objectives should be amended. They also provide an opportunity to discuss a range of other day to day matters such as

annual leave or TOIL arrangements; recent or planned absence; workload pressures; progress with learning and development plans etc.

STRUCTURE OF THE APPRAISAL MEETING AND MID-YEAR REVIEW

The appraisal meeting and mid-year reviews are in two parts. The first part looks back over the appraisal period. It looks at:

- the extent to which the objectives have been met;
- noting any particular achievements
- whether the job description has changed;
- whether the learning and development objectives have been achieved; as well as
- noting any other general comments.

The second part looks forward to the next appraisal period. It provides an opportunity to:

- discuss the objectives to be set; and
- identify the learning and development needs.

USING THE RECORD OF APPRAISAL FORM

The form is produced as a Word document to allow flexibility. The form is not intended to restrict the amount which can be written or the number of objectives which can be set.

SETTING OBJECTIVES

All team and individual objectives should be written as SMART objectives.

The number of objectives set will depend on the 'size' of each objective and the other work which a member of staff is tasked with.

If appropriate objectives should have supporting information such as 'milestones' to be achieved or additional information to clarify how the objective should be met or what support might be available.

Appendix A gives some example templates for drafting SMART objectives.

RECORD KEEPING

A written record of the appraisal, mid-year review and, catch-up meetings will be given to the employee for their own records and copies will be kept in the employee's personnel file.

The written record of appraisal, mid-year review and, catch-up meetings for the Town Clerk will be held by the Chairman of the Staffing Sub-Committee on behalf of the Committee, as well as in the Town Clerk's own personnel file and a copy given to him/her.

Should the Chairman of Staffing Committee change then these records will be made available to them and any other member of the Staffing Committee appointed to conduct an appraisal meeting (either full or mid-year)

SEEKING AGREEMENT

Wherever possible agreement should be sought for the objectives set. It is important for the appraiser to listen carefully to any concerns raised by the 'appraisee.' However if agreement cannot be reached then the disputed objectives can be referred to the Staffing Committee who will consider whether to amend, withdraw, or retain them after having considered the matter.

Wherever possible, agreement should be sought for the other aspects of the appraisal (i.e. looking back at past achievements, training required, etc.). However, where agreement cannot be reached a note of the employee's comments/objections will be kept together with the appraisal report.

TRAINING

All managers who conduct appraisals should receive relevant training.

At least one of the Councillors who forms part of the appraisal panel for the Town Clerk must have received relevant training.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TOWN CLERK'S APPRAISAL AND THE APPRAISALS OF OTHER MEMBERS OF STAFF

For clarity, the Town Clerk appraisal process is entirely independent from that of other members of staff. In other words, if for any reason any stage of the Town Clerk's appraisal is delayed in full or in part - then this should not delay any element of the (including objective setting) appraisal process progressing for any other member of staff.

APPENDIX A

Objectives should always be written meeting the SMART criteria although by adding 'Challenging' to the criteria, the objectives can be used to stretch and develop people.

Challenging	The objective should ideally stretch the individual beyond the current level of performance or into a new area
Specific	The objective should provide clarity about the outcome required
Measurable	The objective must include some means by which it will be possible to identify whether it has been achieved.
Achievable	The objective must be challenging and testing but realistic.
Relevant	The objective must be appropriate to the member of staff's role and also fit within the team objectives. Alternatively, there can be one or two personal objectives which are loosely connected with the team objectives but support staff development. (Note that the Staffing Sub-Committee would need to approve expenditure for staff development.)
Time bound	A time-frame must be given. It might be useful to define interim milestones which can be discussed at the 6 monthly review or more frequently.

TEMPLATES WHICH CAN BE USED AS THE BASIS FOR WRITING CSMART OBJECTIVES

Example 1 – For delivering a one-off piece of work

By...*DATE* ...to have written the Plan to deliver the.....

This objective might lend itself to setting milestones such as:

By...*DATE*...to have presented an outline project plan to the *line manager*.

You might also want to include additional information such as:

"You should use Microsoft Excel to detail the activities which fall under the plan, together with dates and responsibilities."

Example 2 – To raise the standard of current performance

To meet the deadlines for.....on 95% of occasions during the second half of the year.

This objective lends itself to noting what both the appraiser and appraisee need to do to enable this objective to be met. For example:

- Appraiser will explore the possibility of team member attending a Time Management course.
- Appraiser will support the team member in taking one half day to tidy up and sort out personal workspace.
- Team member to use Outlook to create a running 'to do' list.
- Team member will readbook on time management.
- Team member's time management will be a regular item for discussion at catch-up meetings.