

Performance Development Policy and Procedure

Document Control	
Date of Last version	2022
Latest review	
Name of Reviewer	Chloe Whitehead
Consultation	
Approved by	

Table of Contents

Performance Development Policy and Procedure.....	0
Abbreviations and definitions	2
1. Introduction	2
Aim of the procedure	2
Access to this Policy	2
2. Variations and Exemptions to the Policy	3
Temporary staff employed through an agency	3
Staff on probation	3
3. Performance Development Principles	3
Our performance development conversations will:	3
4. Informal Performance Development conversations.....	4
5. Annual Performance Development conversation	5
Employees preparing for the annual performance development conversation	5
Managers preparing for the annual performance development conversation	5
6. The 9-box Performance Grid.....	6
How should the 9-box grid be used?	6
7. SCDC Behaviour framework	7
How does the behaviour framework link to performance development?.....	8
Appendix 1 – FAQs.....	9

Abbreviations and definitions

The table below contains explanations for the abbreviations and definitions used in this policy. If you have any questions about any of these please contact the HR team for clarification.

Abbreviation or word	Meaning
Procedure	The series of steps that will be taken in order
PD	Performance Development

1. Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to providing development opportunities and support to all of its staff, in a fair and equal way. As part of this the Council operates a Performance Development process, to help colleagues identify areas of growth and align these with appropriate tools and actions.

Aim of the procedure

The aim of this procedure is to ensure that the Council treats all staff fairly and consistently. It defines the process for Performance Development conversations, and the expectations for both managers and colleagues. The procedure is aimed at providing a framework for conversations, however aims to accommodate flexibility in approach.

The Policy is not intended to deal with genuine Capability issues; these should be dealt with using the Capability Policy.

Access to this Policy

In the application of this policy, the Council will make reasonable adjustments for employees who are unable to deal with written correspondence and requirements due to disability, as well as any other reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Employees who need assistance with interpreting this policy should contact the HR team for guidance and support.

2. Variations and Exemptions to the Policy

The performance development policy will be applied fairly and equally to all staff, however there are some variations within the procedure for those on different types of employment

Temporary staff employed through an agency

Managers are expected to discuss performance with temporary staff on an ongoing basis, and highlight to them if there are any areas of concern or development opportunities.

If, as a manager, you are concerned with the performance of a temporary member of staff who is employed through an agency, you must discuss this with the agency at the earliest opportunity. For guidance speak to your line manager or the HR team.

Staff on probation

SCDC contracts of employment contain a clause, which places all employees who are new to a role on probation for a period of up to six months. This is intended to allow the employee and their line manager to ensure that the appointment is successful, and that there is a clear induction process to enable the employee to settle into their new post over a defined period of time. As part of this, managers are expected to discuss performance with their new employee, and identify any development areas and opportunities.

Any failure in performance, or failure to reach an acceptable standard of performance, during this period will be dealt with through the Probation Policy.

3. Performance Development Principles

Performance development conversations are part of our approach to living our values, continuous development, and positive well-being.

They are conversations with a strong focus on what each colleague has achieved, future development needs, objectives and goals, and what support will be helpful to ensure positive wellbeing and delivery of future achievements.

Supporting our colleagues' performance should be seen as a continuous process; it's about regular and ongoing discussions between managers and employees and building and maintaining good relationships between managers and employees that are based on mutual trust and respect.

Our performance development conversations will:

Focus on:

- Your achievements, both what has been achieved and how it was delivered,

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

- Your aspirations and how you can reach your full potential either in your current role or any future aspirational role,
- You and your team's contribution to delivering the agreed corporate and service deliverables,
- Your well-being,
- Providing evidence-based feedback from across SCDC,
- Reflecting on your learning and development, and agreeing further support and development opportunities,
- Setting clear objectives and goals for your future deliverables,
- Your individual future aspirations and support needed to achieve this,

Fit with:

- Our values and behaviour framework,
- Organisational, Team and individual objectives,
- Other people management policies, such as probation and capability,
- Our learning and development offering,

Be conducted:

- Using an iterative approach, reviewing goals and achievements,
- In a constructive, open, and positive manner, ensuring you have a meaningful conversation,
- In a fair, consistent, and inclusive way, fitting with the needs of the individual and the role,
- At a time and place suitable for both the colleague and their manager, allowing time for discussion, reflection, and future focus,

4. Informal Performance Development conversations

There is no set format to our informal performance development conversations and each conversation may be held in a different way. They could be a 'check-in' during a walk or video-call or discussing a piece of work. It might be giving 'in the moment' feedback about someone's recent activity at a meeting you've just been to, a chat after a difficult interaction with a customer, or a regular 1-1 meeting. It's about agreeing what works.

The key priority is that each conversation is two-way, focussed on the individual and the things that matter to them. Expectations and priorities are clearly stated, constructive feedback and praise is shared, challenges and concerns raised, links to how each colleague has 'lived' the values made and support / development discussed and agreed regularly.

There is no requirement for these informal conversations to be recorded or HR notified.

5. Annual Performance Development conversation

The annual performance development conversation is the opportunity to capture and celebrate the achievements over the last year and to ensure quality time is spent considering your well-being, future aspirations and development needs.

The annual conversation will be held between April and June each year, allowing you to find a mutually convenient time for this to take place.

While the conversation can take place in whatever format you prefer, the key outputs do need to be recorded on the HR system and agreed between the manager and the employee.

Employees preparing for the annual performance development conversation

It is the responsibility of each colleague to prepare for the annual conversation, thinking through the previous conversations throughout the year, and capturing your thoughts in relation to the areas to be discussed.

It may be beneficial to prepare a summary of what you think your key achievements are in the past year, or what you are most proud of. You may also want to think about what you have found hard, and whether there is any training or development opportunities you would like to explore which might help you improve in these areas.

Managers preparing for the annual performance development conversation

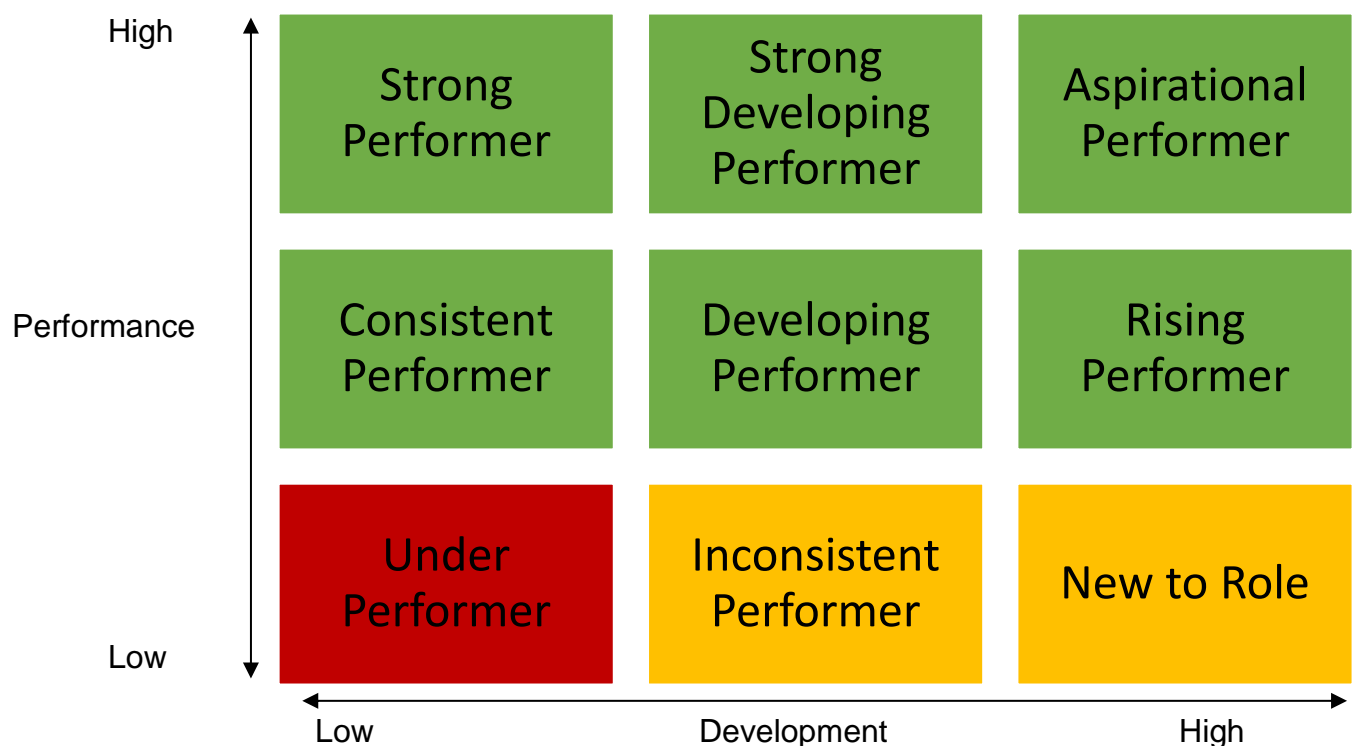
Before holding the conversation with your employee, you might want to think about your Service Plan and team objectives, and how these might relate to each employee; this can help when setting objectives.

If you have identified any potential development opportunities, you may also want to discuss these with your manager to ensure suitability and tie-in with service needs and capacity.

6. The 9-box Performance Grid

To help frame conversations about performance, the Council uses a 9-box performance grid. The purpose of this tool is to help employees develop self-awareness in terms of performance and provide a basis for conversations to identify areas for development and improvement (where appropriate).

The grid is formed around two axes: performance and development. Performance refers to the employee's ability to deliver objectives and outputs, and development refers to their growth within their role.



How should the 9-box grid be used?

The framework should be used to facilitate meaningful discussions around performance and development in annual performance development conversations.

It also acts as a diagnostic tool and is a great way to identify how an employee would like their career to develop; this may mean career progression or development within their role.

The manager and employee should both think about where the employee is on the framework prior to the meeting, and then discuss as part of their conversation. This discussion may include:

- 'What' they have done and how well they did it

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

- 'How' they did it (how they demonstrated the SCDC Behaviours (see below)
- How they are developing and meeting their objectives

The model is not hierarchical and recognises the important role played by all employees who are located in any of the green boxes and the support needed for those in the amber or red box.

It provides the opportunity to assess development needs for personal and professional growth, identify any reasons for poor performance and help support an employee to improve their performance.

7. SCDC Behaviour framework

We recognise the important role behaviours play in influencing the way we work together and with our partners and customers. The way we behave with colleagues, customers, residents and partners is as important as what we do. It helps to ensure that we act consistently as one team to deliver the Council's vision and priorities and to make South Cambridgeshire a great place to work.

Our behaviour framework clearly sets out the behaviours that are important and that we expect everyone to demonstrate at work, regardless of grade and position.

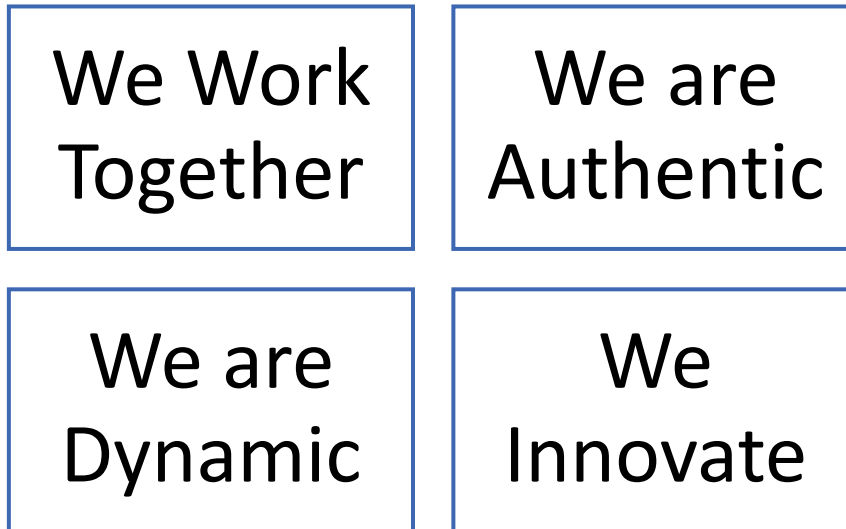
The framework will set out our expectations about:

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

We value:

- Connecting people, places, partnerships and working together
- Authentic and honesty to ensure that we are open and accountable
- Dynamic approach to the delivery of services with drive and energy
- Innovative people who like doing things differently and better

Embracing the Values framework will ensure that the Council is an effective, positive and supportive place to work.



All of us are expected to demonstrate the same values regardless of our grade or position within the organisation. It is recognised that there will be some differences in the way these values are demonstrated depending on whether someone is *delivering* work, *managing* others or taking a *leadership* role. It is likely that most people, whatever their grade, will have to do all three of these things at some point in their work.

How does the behaviour framework link to performance development?

Performance relates to how well you are doing your job, what you do and what objectives have been achieved. 'How' you do your job is how you demonstrate the Behaviours.

The 'how' we do things now forms part of an employee's performance and where they are placed on the 9-box Performance Grid.

Appendix 1 – FAQs

How often do the informal conversations happen?

This is for you and your manager to decide. You need to agree the frequency and how/where they will take place. Remember, they do not have to be face-to-face in the office, it could be out for a walk or over a coffee somewhere. For some people you might agree once a month, others, who have more day-to-day contact with their manager might suggest every 6 to 8 weeks. Most colleagues will already have regular one-to-ones which this conversation would form a part of. It is important to make sure that any current one-to-ones are expanded to discuss the personal aspects of the development conversations and also enable opportunity for discussions around the behaviours.

Is there a minimum number of conversations we should have in a year?

As a guide, we would expect you to have at least 6 dedicated informal performance development conversations in a twelve-month period, one of which would be the annual conversation

Why do we have a formal “annual conversation”?

The annual conversation is the opportunity to formally capture achievements and plans for the next year. This enables the corporate development areas to be built up and discussions about longer term career aspirations and how SCDC can support these to also be collated and therefore internal talent developed and promoted.

The informal performance development conversations are equally as important, as our new ways of working means we need to be flexible about how we manage performance. Over a few months priorities can change so for this reason we are focussing more on conversations which are more responsive.

In addition, the relationship between colleagues and their manager is important so we want to make sure there is regular dialogue on achievements as they happen, not months later and we also want to keep a check on wellbeing and development.

My manager is not having conversations with me what should I do?

Raise it with your manager if you feel able to do so. Let them know you would like to have a conversation about your performance. If things don't change then speak to your Director or HR.

When do I hold the first performance conversation?

The informal performance conversations should start as soon as a colleague joins the organisation; the first few meetings usually form part of the probation period (please refer to the Probation policy) and following that we would expect the conversations to continue in an agreed-upon manner.

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

What support is available for managers to deliver performance conversations?

We realise the importance of developing our managers to consistently hold development conversations and we therefore ensure there are various opportunities for development in relation to all aspects of these conversations; this includes annual training in Spring on how to hold these conversations, as well as a wider programme of manager training to help you develop these skills yourself. Please check our Learning Calendar for information about upcoming courses or speak to a member of the HR team.

What if my team member doesn't want to progress or develop further?

We realise not all staff are looking for career progression, however as an organisation we believe in the importance of development for all, whether this is to improve how you deliver your current role, keep skills up to date, or learn a new skill to support another team member. We are also very supportive of colleagues who are interested in career progression and would want to discuss development options to support this during any conversation.

What if I work for different teams?

Your line manager is responsible for holding your annual performance conversation with you; however, this may involve collecting feedback from other managers and teams an individual has worked with. It may also be appropriate to have two managers in the conversation if there is a benefit to the individual of this approach. This must be agreed by both parties in advance.