



MANAGING STAFF PERFORMANCE POLICY

- Document Version Control

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1. Purpose

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council is committed to fair, consistent and supportive management of employee performance. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees understand what is expected of them, receive timely feedback and appropriate support, and have opportunities to develop their skills and contribute to the Council's Ambition Plan and service objectives.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council. It should be read alongside employees' contracts, job descriptions and the Council's related employment policies and procedures.

3. Principles

The Council will manage performance in accordance with the following principles:

- Expectations and objectives will be clear, fair and relevant to the employee's role and workload.
- Feedback will be timely, constructive, evidence-based and focused on work, conduct, agreed objectives and support needs.
- Performance management will be an ongoing process and will not be limited to the annual appraisal.
- Employees will be encouraged to contribute to discussions, raise concerns and identify support or development needs.
- Performance matters will be handled consistently, sensitively and confidentially.
- The Council will have regard to equality, reasonable adjustments and individual circumstances.
- Formal procedures will be used only where appropriate and after reasonable informal support has been considered.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Council

The Council is the employer and retains overall responsibility for employment matters. The Council will ensure that appropriate policies, resources, training and governance arrangements are in place to support effective performance management.

4.2 Staffing Committee

The Staffing Committee will exercise the responsibilities delegated to it under its terms of reference and the Council's scheme of delegation. It will receive only the information necessary to carry out its functions and will maintain appropriate confidentiality.

4.3 The Clerk

The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day management of employees, subject to the Council's standing orders, scheme of delegation and Staffing Committee terms of reference. This includes setting expectations, holding regular discussions, providing feedback, identifying support and development needs, maintaining appropriate records and following up agreed actions.

4.4 Appraisal of the Clerk

The Clerk's appraisal will be conducted in accordance with the Council's adopted Appraisal Policy and the arrangements approved by the Council. The appraiser must be suitably trained and authorised to undertake the role.

4.5 Employees

Employees are expected to understand their job requirements, participate constructively in performance discussions and appraisals, work towards agreed objectives, identify obstacles or support needs promptly, and undertake agreed learning and development activities.

5. Performance Management Cycle

5.1 Job expectations and objectives

Performance will be considered against the employee's contract, job description, agreed standards, Council policies and reasonable management instructions. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART), with realistic timescales and regard to available resources and workload.

5.2 Regular discussions and one-to-ones

The clerk will hold regular, constructive discussions with employees. These discussions should review progress, recognise achievements, identify barriers, consider workload and wellbeing, and agree any proportionate action, support or follow-up. Significant actions and agreed objectives should be recorded.

5.3 Annual appraisal

A formal appraisal will normally be held annually in accordance with the Council's Appraisal Policy. The appraisal will review the previous period, consider agreed objectives, identify future priorities and development needs, and produce a written record that is shared with the employee.

5.4 Follow-up

The Clerk and employees will review agreed actions and objectives during the year. Training, resources or other support agreed through the process should be arranged within the Council's approval and budget arrangements.

6. Learning and Professional Development

Training and development needs will be identified through job requirements, regular management discussions, appraisal outcomes, changes in legislation or working practices, and the Council's strategic priorities. Development activities will be approved, recorded and reviewed in accordance with the Training and Learning Development Policy and the annual training budget.

The Council may fund appropriate professional memberships where this supports the employee's role and has been approved through the Council's normal arrangements. Employees are expected to maintain relevant continuing professional development where required for their role.

7. Communication

The Clerk will listen to employee concerns, provide clear information and agree proportionate actions where improvement is needed. Employees should raise concerns, barriers or misunderstandings promptly so that matters can be considered and, where possible, resolved at an early stage.

8. Flexible Working and Reasonable Adjustments

The Council will consider flexible working requests fairly and consistently, having regard to operational requirements, contractual arrangements and applicable employment law. Where an employee may be disabled or affected by a health condition, the Council will consider reasonable adjustments and obtain appropriate advice where necessary.

9. Addressing Performance Concerns

Where a performance concern arises, the Clerk will first establish the relevant facts and discuss the matter with the employee promptly. The discussion should identify the expected standard, the evidence available, the employee's explanation, any barriers and the support reasonably required.

The Council will distinguish, as far as reasonably possible, between:

- Capability concerns, which relate to an employee's ability to perform the role and may require support, training, coaching, resources or reasonable adjustments.
- Conduct concerns, which relate to behaviour or a failure to follow reasonable requirements and may need to be addressed under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Where appropriate, an informal improvement plan may be agreed. It should set out the required standard, specific actions, available support, the review period, review dates and the possible next steps if sufficient improvement is not achieved. Formal action will be taken only in accordance with the relevant adopted procedure and after appropriate HR advice has been considered.

10. Pay and Contractual Decisions

An appraisal or performance discussion does not, by itself, change an employee's pay, grade, hours or other contractual terms. Any proposed contractual change or pay decision must be considered and authorised separately in accordance with the Council's governance arrangements, employment contracts and applicable policies.

11. Confidentiality, Records and Data Protection

Performance and appraisal information will be handled confidentially and shared only with those who need access for an authorised employment or governance purpose. Records will be accurate, relevant, proportionate and stored securely. Employees will normally receive a copy of formal appraisal or improvement records relating to them. Records will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the Council's Document Retention Policy and data-protection arrangements.

12. Civility, Respect and Equality

The Council is committed to respectful, inclusive and professional conduct. Performance discussions must focus on work, objectives, behaviour and support needs, rather than personality or irrelevant personal characteristics. This policy will be applied consistently with the Council's Dignity at Work or Civility and Respect arrangements and Equality Policy.

13. Related Policies and Procedures

- Appraisal Policy
- Training and Learning Development Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Equality Policy and reasonable-adjustment arrangements
- Dignity at Work or Civility and Respect arrangements
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Document Retention Policy
- Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation and Staffing Committee Terms of Reference

14. Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier where there is a relevant change in legislation, guidance, Council structure or working arrangements. Material amendments will be presented to the appropriate committee and Full Council for approval.

Adopted by Full Council:

Chair's signature:

Date: