



## **SHERE PARISH COUNCIL**

### **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

#### **1. Purpose of the scheme**

- 1.1 The council recognises the benefits of regular and constructive performance review and is committed to ensuring that staff members are provided with support to enable them to work as effectively as possible.
- 1.2 One of the ways in which such support can be provided is through the performance management scheme, which provides a systematic opportunity to:
- recognise the achievements of staff over the previous year
  - identify ways in which performance can be improved to the benefit of both the individual and the organization
  - agree performance objectives and targets for the coming year
  - identify development/training needs and prepare a personal development plan.
- 1.3 Individual performance will be reviewed on at least an annual basis, plus an interim review carried out six months after the main review

#### **2. The performance review year**

- 2.1 Shere Parish Council's performance reporting year runs between April and March. Objectives and development plans are agreed and documented at the start of the year between the employee and their line manager. A performance appraisal report (example at Annex 1) is completed at the end of the year.
- 2.2 All appraisal documents should be signed and it is the signed copy only that is accepted. The Clerk objectives only will be reported to council and not the whole appraisal document.

#### **3. Who reviews?**

- 3.1 The review will normally be carried out by the immediate line manager. The Clerk will be reviewed by at least two Members of the Human Resources Committee who are qualified and experienced in conducting appraisals. The Clerk will monitor all appraisals for completion and consistency and will report the outcome of this monitoring to the Human Resources Committee.

3.2 The role of the Clerk is to ensure that a robust review process has taken place for all staff, to monitor consistency of approach and serve as a point of reference and, if necessary, appeal for any member of staff who has concerns at the outcome of the appraisal review.

#### **4. Preparation for the review**

4.1 For performance review to be successful and effective it is essential that both the reviewer and the employee prepare. A date should be set for the review meeting at least 1 week prior to the discussion taking place. The supporting paper work including the record from the previous year's review, the part year review and the objectives must be provided to the employee when setting the date.

#### **5. The job description**

5.1 The job description will be reviewed as part of this process, in order to ensure it is a clear reflection of the role, and may be changed by mutual agreement if there are substantial, material and permanent changes to the role.

#### **6. Performance**

6.1 Performance reviews should highlight employees' achievements against objectives and any additional work undertaken. The reviews should also identify areas for personal development of both knowledge and skills. Employees are encouraged to develop their skills through training (both on the job and courses), taking on new projects, and new tasks.

#### **7. Personal development**

7.1 In order to carry out their role and to meet new objectives it is recognised that from time to time employees will need further personal development. Personal development is not simply about attending training courses. Development and training opportunities can be provided by a variety of means, but they should be realistic for both the individual and the council, whilst taking into account operational requirements. Opportunities may include:

- on or off job coaching
- mentoring
- shadowing other staff
- taking on new responsibilities
- undertaking project work or contributing to working parties
- professional updating
- attending conferences, seminars and symposia
- training courses and workshops
- guided reading
- networking
- e-learning

## **8. Performance Improvement**

### **8.1 Step 1 – Informal Procedure**

In circumstances when a line manager or the HR Committee considers an employee needs to improve their performance in a specific area, the line manager will discuss the issue openly and supportively with the employee.

Examples of under-performance include: failing to apply office procedures correctly, failing to follow up and progress agreed actions, ineffective staff management.

The line manager will explain clearly and specifically what areas of performance the employee should improve and with the employee agree the support that will be offered and agree an appropriate timescale for improvement. The line manager should advise the employee (in writing) that if performance does not improve in the timescale agreed then the formal poor performance procedure will start. A copy of this policy should be attached. The line manager should keep notes of the content of the meeting for future reference.

The line manager and the employee will informally review progress during the timescale agreed and if performance has improved to the required level then the matter will end there so long as progress is maintained.

### **8.2 Step 2 Formal Procedure**

If performance does not improve the line manager will discuss with the employee the improvement needed, agree a timescale for action and agree what support will be provided. The line manager will follow up by setting this out in writing and the employee should confirm receipt and agreement in writing. Timescales should allow time for improvement and will normally not exceed 3 months.

If satisfactory improvement is not made in the timescale, the line manager will arrange another meeting to review performance. The employee will be given at least 48 hours advance notice of the meeting and offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a member of the Council (staff or councillor) for support.

At the meeting, the line manager will explore with the employee why performance has not improved. If pre-agreed support has been adequately provided, performance has not improved and there are no exceptional circumstances (eg ill health, bereavement) then the line manager will give a final notice period of 3 months. The line manager will explain clearly that if there is not sufficient improvement in performance at the end of this period then employment will be terminated. A note of the meeting should be taken and a copy sent to all present and copied to members of the HR Committee. The employee should confirm receipt of the record of the meeting and agree that it is factually correct.

### **8.3 Step 3**

At the end of the 3 months, if the line manager considers insufficient progress has been made and there are no extenuating circumstances (e.g. ill health, bereavement) then the employee's contract will be terminated. The line manager will confirm dismissal in writing. Notify the employee of their right to appeal and clarify whether s/he is required to work their notice or whether their contract is terminated with immediate effect and s/he will receive pay in lieu of notice.

#### 8.4 Appeal

The employee has the right to appeal to the HR Committee. An appeal should be submitted in writing to the HR Committee within 7 days of the formal notification of dismissal. The HR Committee and an appropriate independent person will examine the appeal and the relevant HR documents and then interview the line manager and the employee. Employees will be given at least 48 hours advance notice of the meeting and they may be accompanied by a friend or another member of the Council who will be there as an observer, but not a contributor. At the end of the meeting, the HR Committee will retire to consider whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. The employee will be notified of the result within 7 working days of the meeting.

If the line manager is a member of the HR Committee, s/he will be replaced by another councillor previously not involved in the case for the purposes of the appeal.

### 9. Confidentiality

9.1 The appraisal document will be reviewed at the HR Committee and held by the Clerk who will retain the forms for personal files and use the information to prepare the training plan. Only the recommendations are reported to Council.

### 10. Responsibility for the scheme

10.1 Line managers are responsible for preparing and carrying out reviews and setting objectives in a timely and consistent manner. They are also responsible for following up agreed action.

10.2 Responsibility for monitoring the process and ensuring it is carried out consistently, rests with the Clerk. The Human Resources Committee will monitor progress to ensure all review discussions and mini-reviews are carried out at the appropriate times and that agreed personal development/performance improvement is carried out

| Adopted                   | Reviewed   | Re-adopted by Full Council                             |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2020 | 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2022<br>HR 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 | 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2022<br>4 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 |
|                           | To be reviewed   | June 2026  |