

Staff Appraisal Framework

Introduction

This document is aimed at being a guide to the Authority's appraisal scheme. It explains the reasons for having such a scheme and the principles of its operation.

What is an Appraisal?

An appraisal is a planned and structured meeting between an employee and their immediate manager which takes place on a regular basis and is recorded. The appraisal provides a scheduled opportunity away from interruptions to discuss work-related matters.

The appraisal is an opportunity to take an overall view of work content and volume, performance, to discuss what has been achieved during the reporting period and agree priorities and objectives for the next reporting period.

The appraisal is not a replacement for on-the-job feedback and no-one should wait until the appraisal for a discussion about issues that affect the way they undertake work or their welfare at work. Any member of staff can contact the Chief Executive direct if they have concerns that they do not feel able to discuss with their line manager.

The appraisal is a two way process between employee and line manager although the main focus is on the employee.

The Aims of the Appraisal Scheme

The aims of the appraisal scheme are

- to be one of the ways which contribute to the Police Authority's culture of valuing staff;
- to help to develop both the individual and the organisation;
- to assist in ensuring that the Authority's objectives and priorities as outlined in the budget and business plan are reflected in the objectives and priorities of individual staff.

The Objectives of The Appraisal Scheme

The objectives of the appraisal scheme are:

- to provide the opportunity at least once a year for a joint review of a person's work to build on strengths and weaknesses and enable them to maximise their contribution to the organisation;
- Agree objectives, priorities and standards for the next appraisal period;
- Identify training and development needs and priorities for the next appraisal period;
- Provide an opportunity for manager and postholder to have open and honest discussion about issues which affect their working relationship;
- Regular review of job descriptions to match organisational requirements to individual tasks

The Benefits of an Appraisal Scheme

For Postholders

- The opportunity to receive regular information on your performance;
- The opportunity to discuss issues on a regular basis with your line manager;
- The opportunity to identify where improvements to working practices can be made;
- Development within your post by identification of strengths and weaknesses and training and development needs;
- Agree clear targets and priorities;
- The opportunity to identify problems which may be restricting progress or causing inefficient work practices;
- The proactive involvement of the post-holder in the development of themselves and the organisation.
- Postholders know what is expected of them, how and when.

For the Police Authority

- Improved communication
- Development of a participative approach to work issues
- Opportunity to relate the objectives and priorities of the organisation with those of individuals
- Trained and motivated staff
- Joint identification of problems and their solutions
- A consistent approach to managing performance, motivation and development

Principles of the Scheme

- Every employee will have a formal appraisal at least once a year based on their date of joining the Authority
- It will be for employees together with their managers to decide the frequency of interim meetings but there should be at least one during the course of the year – six months after the formal appraisal
- An employee's immediate line manager will conduct the appraisal process with input where relevant from appropriate professional advisors.
- The employee (not the line manager) will be responsible for making notes of the formal appraisal / completing the Action Plan –the Action Plan will be signed by both the employee and the line manager as an agreed record.
- The Chief Executive will sign to say that they have read the Action Plan and, where appropriate, in accordance with an individual's contract, the Action Plan will include agreement that an pay increment can be awarded;
- The original Action Plan will be filed on the employee's personal file, a copy may be held by both the employee and the line manager.
- Where the employee consents, 360' feedback will be used as part of the formal appraisal process.
- Where there are unresolved / disputed issues the assistance of the Chief Executive will be requested in order to find a solution; if the Chief Executive is the line manager the assistance of the Chairman of the Police Authority will be sought.

- The detail of the appraisal is confidential between those people present; there may however be circumstances when in order to implement an agreed action it will be necessary to 'reveal' / paraphrase some of the discussion – this should only be done with the consent of all parties concerned.

The Appraisal Procedure and Documents

General

It is intended that the appraisal scheme will be based on the 'self appraisal' method whereby individuals are encouraged to consider and analyse their own performance and then this is discussed. With their line manager.

Arranging the Formal Appraisal and 360' feedback

1. The employee and the line manager agree a date for the formal appraisal - ideally about 3 weeks in advance in order to make the necessary preparations. It is the manager's responsibility to initiate the process.
2. The employee and the line manager will agree a list of people – minimum of 4 and maximum of 10 that can be approached to complete the 360' feedback questionnaire. These people can be drawn from the Authority – including Members, the Force or other organisations with whom the employee has contact. This needs to be done at the same time as the formal appraisal date is arranged in order to give time to contact everyone and receive the completed forms. The 360' form and accompanying letter are given at Appendix 1. The manager will be responsible for sending out the letter and receiving the completed feedback questionnaires and deciding the best way of dealing with the forms e.g. either providing each of the anonymised forms to the employee or summarising them.

The completed 360' forms will be anonymous.

3. The employee will book a suitable room for the meeting.
4. The employee and the manager will schedule an appointment lasting at least 1 hour in their diary

Preparing for the Formal Appraisal Interview

1. Both the employee and the manager should prepare for the interview by considering what has happened during the review period - using the preparation form given at Appendix 2 as a guide. The main points to consider are:
 - Is the job description still an accurate description of the duties undertaken and those needed by the organisation?
 - Performance in relation to the key duties
 - Performance in relation to agreed targets and objectives
 - Issues that may have affected performance – good, bad, within and without the postholders control
 - Effectiveness of work practices and relationships
 - Priorities and objectives for the next reporting period

- Training and development needs

The Appraisal Interview

Arrangements should be made so that the appraisal interview can take place free from interruptions. It should be undertaken by those involved as an opportunity for honest and constructive dialogue.

The discussion at the appraisal interview should not be an opportunity to work through a catalogue of criticism, it is an opportunity to reflect together on performance and progress and agree objectives for the future.

The interchange may not always be easy or comfortable. In many cases a range of complex matters will require airing and sometimes contentious issues will need to be discussed. Issues must be faced objectively and honestly and participants must be prepared to listen and consider the other's point of view. In this way problems can be minimised and managed and solutions found to which both parties will be committed.

Appendix 3 gives a framework for the interview and suggests areas to be explored based on the preparation already done by the participants.

During the appraisal it **may** be necessary to agree changes to the job description and working practices; It **will** be necessary to agree objectives and priorities for the next reporting period; it **will** be necessary to agree training and development needs and priorities; it **will** also be necessary to agree the timing for the first interim interview.

The employee will be responsible for taking notes of the points agreed – or disputed - and completing the action plan – a proforma is given as Appendix 4- and getting it signed by the participants and if an increment is due signed by the Chief Executive.

The Interim Interviews

This should be the chance to review and update the progress being made against the action plan. The meeting should be held away from the desk and free of interruptions but should be reasonably informal and whilst notes can be taken by agreement there is little need for any formal documentation.

Conclusion

By using this framework and adapting it to suit the needs of individuals it will be possible to encourage the development of both the organisation and the individuals within it in a positive and effect way .