



Northumberland
County Council

**HUMAN RESOURCES
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Managing Performance Policy

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This Policy has been Impact Assessed against the Equality Act 2010

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Version	Date	Description
1.0		Revised Policy incorporating previous Employee Performance Management and Appraisal Policy AND Capability Procedure

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1.0 Operational Summary

1.1 Policy Aim

This policy has been developed to assist managers and employees to ensure they understand what is required of them in their role and what they need to do to develop and progress in order to provide and maintain high quality services. This policy also aims to set out the formal process to follow to support employees who are not meeting their performance objectives to improve their performance.

1.2 Policy Summary

This policy provides a step by step guide on the process for developing and supporting employees to meet required job performance standards (including probationary periods) and a formal procedure where these standards are not met despite the necessary training and support being provided.

1.3 What it Means for Employees

This policy applies to all employees employed by Northumberland County Council with the exception of centrally employed teachers, who in terms of appraisal, are covered by the Appraisal for Centrally Employed Teachers Policy and employees who are in still in their probation period who are covered by the Probation Policy.

All employees are required to perform at the standard expected of their role, to actively participate in one to ones, appraisals and reviews and to undertake training and development to meet their agreed development plans and objectives.

All full and part time employees must receive an Annual Performance Appraisal comprising of an annual review and work plan. This includes people on part time contracts who have worked for more than one year.

Employees still on probation need not complete the annual performance appraisal until they have successfully completed their probationary period. They must however receive a work plan for probationary period and it is expected that the annual performance appraisal be picked up on successful completion of the probationary period.

Those with line management responsibility must ensure that employees receive regular feedback and development including (but not limited to) one to ones, team meetings and annual appraisals. They must also ensure sufficient support is available to support employees with meeting their objectives. They are responsible for managing performance concerns.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Northumberland County Council is committed to a planned approach to induction, training and development which ensures organisational needs and requirements are matched with individual needs and aspirations.
- 2.2 A suite of documents is available to support with this approach including the appraisal form, the core competency framework, the organisational vision, mission and values and job descriptions and person specifications.
- 2.3 The performance management process is designed to ensure all employees understand what is required of them in their role and that they are aware of what they need to do to develop and progress.
- 2.4 The main elements of the Performance Management process are:
- A review of performance over the previous 12 months (appraisal) and the process to be followed for probationary periods (for new entrants to the Council only)
 - An identification of training and development needs to ensure full development within the current role
 - Supporting and maintaining knowledge and skills
 - Planning career development if desired
 - A formal procedure to assist in the resolution of performance issues with sanctions delivered up to dismissal for poor performance which does not improve following a sustained period of support.
- 2.5 Northumberland County Council is committed to providing the necessary support to give every opportunity for employees to meet the required standards of job performance and recognises that its continued success is dependent upon employees achieving and maintaining these standards in their roles.
- 2.6 This policy focussed on the principle of good management and development. All individuals must be treated fairly and equitably and the performance management process should be made up of honest and regular feedback delivered in an open and transparent manner. In turn employees are expected to make a commitment to develop and apply their knowledge and skills to their roles to meet the demands of their post and to work flexibly in the interests of their individual service area and the Council at large.

3.0 Purpose

- 3.1 The Managing Performance Process aims to improve the overall performance of the Council by ensuring that all employees are aware of the values, strategic aims and goals of the organisation and what they need to achieve to help attain these aims and goals.
- 3.2 The Council expects all employees to carry out their role to demonstrate the values of the organisation.

- 3.3 The Council always aims to manage and develop employees by agreeing clear measurable objectives. These will be related to wider departmental objectives and the Council's priorities which can be found in the corporate plan.
- 3.4 Individual appraisals will be undertaken based on job descriptions, person specifications and career aspirations. Future development and training needs will be discussed during the appraisal process and a personal development plan must be agreed between the employee and the manager.

4.0 Duties

Performance management is the responsibility of everyone within the council. It is a process which contributes to the effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve high levels of organisation performance. As such, it establishes a shared understanding about what needs to be achieved and establishes an approach to leading and developing people which will ensure that these outcomes are achieved. Whilst we have this shared responsibility we also have the following individual responsibilities:

4.1 Managers are responsible for:

- managing the performance of their employees
- ensuring that employees have work targets and objectives set
- appraising the performance of all employees at least once a year
- meeting with employees on a regular basis to review individual and team performance (through one-to-one / supervision meetings or team meetings)
- ensuring that appropriate learning and development activities and opportunities are identified, planned, delivered and evaluated to support employees in their roles
- being familiar with and adhering to this policy
- raising awareness of this policy document and other associated policies and procedures

4.2 Employees are responsible for:

- taking an active role in reviewing their own performance and targets
- contribute to team discussions and review of the performance and targets of the team
- take up appropriate / relevant learning and development opportunities
- manage their own continuous professional and personal development as appropriate
- be familiar with and adhere to this policy

4.3 The Council's Chief Executive and Directors have overall responsibility for:

- ensuring that the Managing Performance Policy is implemented and

adopted by the workforce

4.4 The HR & OD team are responsible for:

- ensuring compliance with the policy and its supporting legislation
- providing advice, support and guidance to all parties on the application of the policy
- ensuring that suitable learning and development opportunities and resources are developed and available to support the policy and the roles of those involved
- regularly reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of the policy

5.0 Definition of Terms Used

5.1 Appraisal

An ongoing cycle of review, planning, development and evaluation for employees, linked to organisational and individual development needs. The development review/appraisal is a partnership between employees and their line manager where objectives and personal development plans are agreed.

5.2 Work Plan

Is the outcome of the planning stage of the development review process. It focuses on the knowledge and skills needed to apply to the job

5.3 Appraisee

The employee who is having a formal assessment

5.4 Appraiser

This is normally the person who is their line manager or supervisor.

5.5 Objectives

Appraisees should agree specific work related SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) objectives. These should be linked to service developments, the achievement of recognised standards that apply in the role of the work area and the Council's values and priorities.

In addition learning and development requirements should be derived from the assessment of development needs made during the performance review and evaluation of previous learning. Objectives may be short, medium or long term with set timescales and review dates.

5.6 Informal Performance Management

Informal performance management is the regular performance management which most employees will be involved in. This includes 1:1s, team meetings and supervision between Managers and direct reports.

5.7 Formal Performance Management

This replaces the former capability procedure and it is a more formal route to deal with performance concerns. employees will only be involved in this process when there are performance concerns and informal performance management has not led to sufficient improvement.

6. Informal Performance Management

6.1 Introduction

Informal performance management is the process which most employees will be involved in throughout their employment with Northumberland County Council. This will include the suite of tools which Managers will use to support, manage and develop the performance of their teams. These are generally as listed below but Managers may feel that there are other options which may be supportive to employees e.g. reflection, mentoring, toolbox briefings or any other relevant performance management tool.

6.2 One-to-one / Supervision meetings

6.2.1 Managers should hold one-to-one meetings with all employees on a regular basis. It is recommended that meetings are held every four to six weeks.

6.2.2 In some services, one-to-one meetings with employees may not be appropriate or practical given the nature of the job role or hours of employment.

6.2.3 In certain professions such as social care one-to-one meetings may be more commonly known as 'supervision' meetings. The frequency of these meetings may be determined by the relevant professional body or association.

6.2.4 Outcomes of one-to-one meetings should be recorded by the manager in writing and countersigned by the employee. A suggested template for recording is available (Appendix 2)

6.3 Newly Appointed employees to the Council

6.3.1 All new starters must have an induction and will go through a period of probation which are set out within the Induction and Probationary Policies. Further information can also be found [here](#). The tools listed within this policy may be used throughout the probation period, however this is a separate process outside of the Managing Performance Policy and is included in the Probationary Policy.

6.3.2 Induction – within the first month of any new employee to the Council or Department, the employee and manager must meet to discuss the following:

- Ensure local induction checklist (appendix three) is complete and signed off
- Appraisee understands their job responsibilities
- Discuss appraisee's existing knowledge and skills against the person specification and job description for their role
- Identify learning and development needs and agree a development plan

- Set SMART objectives to ensure working towards achievement of probationary period (if applicable)
- Set initial work specific SMART objectives
- Agree arrangements for appraisal, mandatory training and ongoing supervision/contact arrangements for ongoing support from line manager.
- Ensure Appraisee understands Probationary Period requirements (including Performance criteria) and the process to be followed (if applicable).
- Agree arrangements for first probationary period progress report for new employees meeting (if applicable)
- Agree arrangements for second probationary period progress period for new employees meeting (if applicable)

6.3.3 The table below shows the process that should be followed by current Council employees who move to an alternative post who are not subject to a Probationary Period Process

Internal Moves	FORMAT	TIMINGS
1st Review Meeting (Line Manager)	Complete Progress Report Discuss areas and review If required standard not met discuss/review:- Objectives/Expectations/Training Plan - provide documentary evidence [<i>consider support from OH/HR/Senior Manager</i>]	No later than 3 Months
2nd Review Meeting (Line Manager)	Complete Progress Report Discuss areas under review	No later than 6 Months

6.3.4 During all of the Review Meetings, taking into account those employees who are subject to a Probationary Period and for all other internal employee moves, the manager and employee should meet to discuss the following:

- Ensure local induction checklist is complete and signed off
- Appraisee understands their job responsibilities
- Discuss appraisee's existing knowledge and skills against person specification and job description
- Identify learning and development needs and agree a development plan
- Set initial work specific SMART objectives
- Agree arrangements for appraisal, mandatory training and ongoing supervision/contact arrangements for ongoing support from line manager.
- Ensure Appraisee understands Probationary Period requirements (including Performance criteria) and the process to be followed (if applicable).
- Agree arrangements for next probationary period review or review meeting
- If there is a decision made to continue a probationary period this must be made in consultation with Human Resources.

6.4 Annual Appraisal

6.4.1 It is a requirement of Northumberland County Council, through our people management processes, for performance appraisals to be conducted annually for all employees. Appraisal is important to develop employees, improve organisational

performance and to support managers planning their team's workload and managing their performance. Appraisal is an ongoing process, comprised of regular one-to-one or supervision meetings and an Annual Performance Appraisal & Review as shown in the flowchart in Appendix 4.

6.4.2 The annual performance appraisal is designed to be a positive experience. Where issues relating to the under-performance or capability of an employee are identified, managers should address these issues straight away using one-to-one / supervision meetings and following the appropriate council processes. The annual performance appraisal is not the appropriate forum in which to raise concerns for the first time.

6.4.3 The purpose of the Annual Performance Appraisal & Review is to:

- evaluate job performance over the previous 12 months including performance against the Northumberland County Council core competencies
- develop and agree a work plan (objectives and development needs) for the next 12 months
- translate the corporate plan and service statements into individual objectives so that every employee is clear about the contribution they make
- establish individual and team development needs so that services can compile a training needs analysis and plan which is appropriately resourced
- help employees to plan and develop their careers with Northumberland County Council

6.4.4 It is important to emphasise that the quality of the performance appraisal discussion and the opportunity for manager and employee to review performance and agree a work plan together is the most important feature of an effective appraisal. However, it is important that the outcomes of the performance appraisal are recorded in writing on the appropriate form, and signed by the manager and employee. The council has developed a corporate Annual Performance Appraisal Form (appendix 4) and detailed Performance Appraisal Guidance & FAQs (appendix 5) for managers and employees. It is recommended that the form is used for all employees however a shortened version (appendix 6) is available for casual employees or front-line teams where team appraisal is a more appropriate approach. Guidance is also provided for this form (appendix 7).

6.4.5 This policy relates to the council's current paper based performance appraisal and review processes. The council may decide to implement new technology based performance appraisal processes in the future to which this policy will also apply.

6.4.6 Detailed guidance for managers and employees is also available in relation to their responsibilities before, during and after the appraisal meeting.

6.5 Annual Performance Appraisal Review

6.5.1 An Annual Performance Appraisal Review should be undertaken by the manager and employee to review and record progress against the performance and development objectives six months after the annual performance appraisal. It should be recorded in the appraisal document (appendix 4)

6.5.2 This six month review is also an opportunity to make adjustments to timescales and agree new performance and development objectives if necessary.

6.5.3 At this stage, any performance concerns should be highlighted and if objectives are not being met, a period of informal support could be considered.

6.6 Team Appraisal

6.6.1 The council recognises that where groups of employees have common roles and responsibilities it can be more effective for managers and employees to have a group discussion and to agree collectively the objectives and competencies that are relevant and essential for achieving high levels of performance within the team. Managers wishing to employ a group appraisal approach should contact HR & OD for advice and support.

6.6.2 If a team appraisal approach is used it is still important to ensure that all employees are given the opportunity to have an individual discussion with their manager around their performance and their development needs.

6.6.3 If a team appraisal approach is used it is also a requirement that a six month review with the team takes place.

6.6.4 Records of team annual appraisals and reviews should be shared and agreed collectively with all team members.

6.6.5. Individuals must be offered an individual discussion and this must be formally declined.

6.7 Work Plan

6.7.1 Following a review of performance over the previous 12 months, attention should be directed towards planning for the future. The work plan is the outcome of the planning stage of the appraisal meeting.

6.7.2 The primary focus of the planning stage should be to enable appraisee's to effectively meet the demands of their current post and reflect on their achievements. It can also include any interest that the organisation has in developing the appraisee for the future, the appraisee's personal interests and career development aspirations. Development will primarily focus on helping employees carry out their current job in line with the Council's operational and strategic needs although personal interests and opportunity for career progression will also be taken into account.

6.7.3 The Work Plan focuses on learning and development requirements derived for the assessment of development needs made during the performance review and evaluation of previous learning.

- 6.7.4 Learning & Development requirements may be based on skill and/or knowledge gaps identified at the performance review stage or the development of new skills or knowledge to meet service demands.
- 6.7.5 Identified development needs should be prioritised and recorded within the Work Plan. A clear action plan of how the appraisee will meet the development needs and how these will be achieved should be recorded. The Work Plan should be agreed between the appraisee and appraiser and be signed and dated. This document should be regarded as a “living” document and should be periodically reviewed within supervision/1:1s to ensure that the post holder has the resources to support them and make necessary amendments.

Objectives

- 6.7.6 Objectives may be short, medium or long term with set timescales and review dates.
- 6.7.7 Appraisees should agree specific work related objectives; these should be linked to service developments, the achievement of recognised standards that apply in the role or the work area and the Council’s priorities

6.8 Dealing with Disagreements at Appraisal about Achievement of Objectives or Appraisal Experience

- 6.8.1 If the appraiser and the appraisee cannot agree, either one has the right to seek support on an informal local basis from a third party, such as the line manager of the appraiser which should always be the approach in the first instance. In certain situations and with the approval of an HR manager, someone from the human resources department may be nominated as a reviewer. This third person may seek further information from both the appraisee and the appraiser. They will look at the information from both and come to an objective decision that is non-discriminatory in order to facilitate an agreement between the appraiser and appraisee.
- 6.8.2 If this informal process cannot address the problem, then the individual employee can take their case through the Council’s Grievance Procedure.

6.9 Informal Support Plan – Performance Management

- 6.9.1 Where an employee does not perform at the level required for the post, or does not meet their objectives or their work plan within the identified timeframe this should be discussed and documented. This may be during the formal appraisal process or at any point in the year. A template form is provided to document an informal support plan at appendix 1.
- 6.9.2 Appropriate support and guidance should be provided and a plan put in place to address identified problems with the timescales for improvement set.

Consideration should be given to both external and internal issues that may be affecting the individual's performance alongside training and development issues.

6.9.3 Where performance concerns continue or where they have only been minor improvement, the Manager needs to consider whether appropriate support has been provided. If not, the support plan can be extended. If so, then the concerns can be escalated to the formal performance procedure.

6.9.4 When dealing with apparent performance issues consideration needs to be given as to whether the issues have arisen due to an employee who is capable but who **chooses** not to fulfil the requirements of the role. This directly relates to conduct and is therefore dealt with through the Council's Disciplinary Procedure).

6.9.4 Appropriate consideration should be given to any underlying health conditions which may be impacting on the employee's ability to undertake the duties associated with their role. Advice should be sought from Human Resources and Occupational Health where appropriate and any adjustments which are made to the process should be clearly documented within supervision notes.

7.0 Formal - Performance Procedure

7.1 Introduction

If the informal support plan does not lead to improved performance, the formal performance procedure should be invoked. To do this, the manager should collate all relevant evidence and prepare a summary (appendix 8) setting out the concerns regarding performance and the improvement required along with any other relevant information. The Manager needs to consider where this is a sufficient shortfall and if so, they need to schedule a formal performance meeting (process for this is set out below).

The sections that follow detail the actions which must be taken to ensure that the procedure is followed correctly. At this stage, managers must ensure that they have all of the relevant facts available and be sure of the issues to be covered.

The fundamental objective is to support employees to improve and sustain their performance at work. The purpose of Meetings held under the Formal Procedure are as follows:

- To review support provision and establish whether anything further can be offered
- To give full consideration of the facts of the poor performance including any mitigating circumstances or learning needs
- To decide whether there has been any improvement in performance and if so whether this is sufficient to revert back to informal performance management
- To set objectives (except at the Third and Final Review Meeting)

- To specify the time limit within which improvement is required
- To determine how the process will be monitored
- To detail the support and training available
- To outline the consequences if there is no improvement

Manager's must keep clear records of any meetings held under the Formal Procedure. A proforma is provided for this purpose at Appendix 9.

7.2 First Formal Performance Meeting

7.2.1 This is the first formal meeting between the relevant manager, the employee, their representative (if they choose to have them present) and a representative from Human Resources

7.2.2 The following steps must be taken when inviting employees to a First Formal Performance Meeting:

- Invite the employee to the meeting by letter giving at least 5 working days notice (appendix 10)
- Advise the employee that this is a first formal performance meeting under the formal procedure
- Outline the reasons for the meeting ie the performance issues which will be discussed
- Advise the employee of the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or if they are a member of a recognised Trade Union, that they can be accompanied by a representative of that union
- Ask the employee to advise you whether s/he will be accompanied at the meeting
- Ensure that the employee has been provided with a copy of this policy.
- Arrange for a representative from the Human Resources department to be present at the meeting.

7.2.3 The information gathered by the Manager at 7.1 should form the basis of discussions. Performance is reviewed against job description, objectives and their personal development plan from the appraisal process.

7.2.4 There will usually be one of two possible outcomes of the meeting:

- i) no formal action is required. Consider any supportive actions as appropriate including a further informal support plan.
- ii) formal action is required. Following this it is necessary to agree a formal Development Action Plan. A number of steps must be put in place:
 - Identify who will carry out interim reviews
 - Confirm formal performance review will be held within next 2 months
 - Set a date for the first performance review meeting
 - Confirm the individual will move to a formal review performance meeting
 - Confirm the right of appeal against this and also where additional support and resources may be obtained to support the individual to help meet the competencies required.

7.2.5 The main points of the first formal performance meeting must be summarised in a letter to the employee (appendix 11). If formal action is being confirmed include a copy of the agreed Development Action Plan with the letter.

7.3 Review Performance Meeting

7.3.1 Following the agreed review period (usually within 2 months), the Review Performance Meeting will be held. Send a reminder to the employee at least 5 working days prior to the meeting (appendix 12). The consequence of not meeting the required improvement at any point during the 2 months review period (for example not making satisfactory progress), may trigger this sooner.

7.3.2 This is the second formal meeting between the relevant manager, the employee, their representative and a representative from Human Resources.

7.3.3 During the meeting performance is reviewed against the objectives set out in the agreed Development Action Plan from the Formal Performance Meeting and from any interim reviews.

7.3.4 There will usually be one of two possible outcomes of the meeting:

- i) Development Action Plan MET – performance has improved, no further formal action is required – employee must be informed that they will need to maintain an acceptable level of performance and if, within a period of 12 months, performance falls below an acceptable level then action will recommence at this level.
- ii) Development Action Plan NOT MET – performance has not improved – further development is required. Review and confirm a further Development Action Plan; identify who will carry out interim reviews; confirm formal review will be held within 2 months; set a date for the Final Review Meeting; confirm the right of appeal (see Section 7.9).

7.3.5 The main points of the Review Performance Meeting must be summarised in a letter to the employee (appendix 13) and a copy of the further agreed Development Action Plan must be included with the letter (when development action plan has not been met).

7.5 Final Review Meeting

7.5.1 On the agreed review date, the Final Review Meeting will be held. Send a reminder to the employee at least 5 working days prior to the meeting. In accordance with grey book terms and conditions, dependent upon the circumstances of the case and the possible consequences, firefighters are entitled to receive up to 21 day's notice of the meeting) (appendix 14).

7.5.2 This is the final formal performance meeting of the procedure. The appropriate Senior Manager/Head of Service will become involved at this stage and will hold the meeting in the presence of the manager who has been holding the meetings from the formal process, the employee, their representative (if the employee wishes to have them present) and a representative from Human Resources who has not previously been involved.

7.5.3 During the meeting performance is reviewed against the objectives set out in the Development Action Plan from the Review Meeting and from any interim reviews. The Line Manager will be expected to produce a summary report for consideration (appendix 15) and collate all relevant documentation. Any improvements in performance will be considered along with any mitigating circumstances.

7.5.4 There may be a choice of outcomes from this meeting, which are as follows:

- i) Development Action Plan MET – performance has improved, no further formal action is required – employee must be informed that they will need to maintain an acceptable level of performance and if, within a period of 24 months, performance falls below an acceptable level then action will recommence at this level.
- ii) Development Action Plan NOT MET – performance has not improved – the employee may be dismissed on the grounds of capability. Consideration should be given to any appropriate and suitable alternatives to dismissal e.g. demotion, and advice must be sought from the Human Resources Department. The dismissal will be with the appropriate period of paid notice and they will be informed that they have the right of appeal as detailed in Section 7.9 of this procedure.

7.5.5 The outcome of the Third and Final Review Meeting must be summarised in a letter to the employee (appendices 15 & 16). The Chair of the Third and Final Review Meeting is responsible for devising the letter for the employee which confirms dismissal (advice should be sought from the HR Representative).

7.5 Gross incapability

For the purpose of this procedure, gross incapability is performance of such a standard that the County Council is unable to tolerate the continued employment of the individual. Before deciding to treat a case as gross incapability, directorates **MUST** seek the advice of the Human Resources .

The following are examples of gross incapability, which may well warrant summary dismissal, even for a first offence:

- Where the safety of clients is jeopardised
- Where substantial financial loss to the County Council is caused

Where gross incapability is alleged, an investigating officer must be appointed. Where the investigation alleges gross incapability, the employee shall be called to attend a hearing before the Nominated Officer. The Nominated Officer shall consider all facts relevant to the case and shall give the employee an opportunity to put forward an explanation or defence. If, having heard the case, the Nominated Officer considers that more serious action is necessary, the employee will be informed in writing.

In the circumstances referred to above, the employee may be liable to one of the following sanctions:

- summary dismissal (in the case of gross incapability),
- dismissal with due notice; or,
- demotion and/or transfer (with or without a caution) to other employment within the County Council subject to the prior approval of the Director of Human Resources.

7.6 Summary of Formal Procedure Performance Meetings and Possible Outcomes

Outcomes of meetings will vary according to the stage of the formal procedure; the table below summarises the options at each stage.

Level of Formal Meeting	Attendees	Possible Outcomes
First Formal Performance Meeting	Employee (offered right to be accompanied by Trade Union Representative or work colleague) Appropriate Line Manager	No Formal Action OR Confirm Development Action Plan set, Formal Monitoring and Formal Review usually within 2 months. Right of appeal within 10 working days to the

	HR Representative	appropriate Line Manager or nominated deputy acting on their behalf and an HR representative who has not previously been involved
Review Performance Meeting	Employee (offered right to be accompanied by Trade Union Representative or work colleague) Appropriate Line Manager HR Representative	Development Action Plan MET - employee must be informed that they will need to maintain an acceptable level of performance and if, within a period of 12 months, performance falls below an acceptable level then action will re-commence at this level; OR Development Action Plan NOT MET. Further period of Formal Monitoring and Formal Performance Review in 2 months. Right of appeal within 10 working days to the appropriate General Manager or nominated deputy acting on their behalf and an HR representative who has not previously been involved
Final Performance Review	Employee (offered right to be accompanied by Trade Union Representative or work colleague) Senior Manager Line Manager previously involved in performance management HR Representative not previously involved	Development Action Plan MET - employee must be informed that they will need to maintain an acceptable level of performance and if, within a period of 24 months, performance falls below an acceptable level then action will re-commence at this level OR Development Action Plan NOT MET: Dismiss employee with appropriate notice – give appropriate consideration to suitable and reasonable alternatives to dismissal. Right of appeal within 10 working days to a Head of Service or Director

7.7 Timings between Formal Meetings

7.7.1 Agreed review periods will usually be a period of 2 months. The consequence of the employee not meeting the required improvement at any point during the 2 month review period may trigger the next appropriate review meeting (for example where the employee fails to make satisfactory progress)

Under exceptional circumstances the period set may be greater (i.e. for the completion of additional training) if this is thought necessary given the nature of the role being undertaken.

7.8 Interim Reviews

7.8.1 In addition to the Formal Reviews, Interim Reviews should be conducted as part of the ongoing improvement process between the employee and the reviewer.

7.8.2 Interim Reviews provide both parties with an opportunity to assess progress. Every case is individual but good practice would be to hold at least one interim review per month.

7.8.3 These meetings are expected to be between the appropriate line manager and employee only and can take place at the same time as regular 1:1 meetings

7.8.4 The objectives of an Interim Review are to:

- assess progress between formal reviews
- note specific mitigating circumstances eg leave of absence, failure to provide resources required to meet the agreed development action plan

7.9 Appeals

7.9.1 The right to appeal against formal action taken at First Formal, Review and Final Review stages is open to any employee regardless of length of service, whether full or part time, substantive or temporary, who is employed under a contract of employment with the Council. The objective of the appeal meeting is to review the evidence in an impartial and objective manner. Managers hearing an appeal may overturn a decision if they feel it was unfair or unreasonable.

7.9.2 An appeal can be lodged for any of the following reasons:

- the action was too severe
- there is new evidence available. Any new evidence which is brought to light should be read by the manager/director/panel hearing the appeal to decide whether it is relevant to the case
- procedures were not followed. If a breach in procedure occurred before the meeting, the manager/director/panel hearing the appeal must consider whether the incident was significant enough to render any subsequent action unfair. If there is evidence to suggest that a meeting has been conducted improperly, a new meeting should be convened, with a different senior manager and the original action annulled.

7.9.3 An appeal should be lodged in writing at the appropriate level as follows:

At First Formal Performance Stage	Appropriate Line Manager	Within 10 working of the letter being received
At Review Performance Stage	Appropriate Senior Manager	Within 10 working days of the letter being received
At Final Review Stage	Lodge with the Director of Human Resources. Heard by Head of Service or Director	Within 15 working days of the letter being received

7.9.4 An acknowledgement of receipt should be sent following all appeals received within five working days. Appeals should take place as soon as is reasonably practicable.

8.0 Training and Support

8.1 All managers involved in the implementation of the policy will receive the appropriate training, advice and support from their HR representatives with regard to both practical and procedural issues. Services will be made aware of any amends or updates to the policy via the appropriate channels. All additions will also be included in the guidance notes on the HR Intranet page.

9.0 Process for Monitoring and Audit

The process for monitoring compliance with the effectiveness of this policy is as follows:

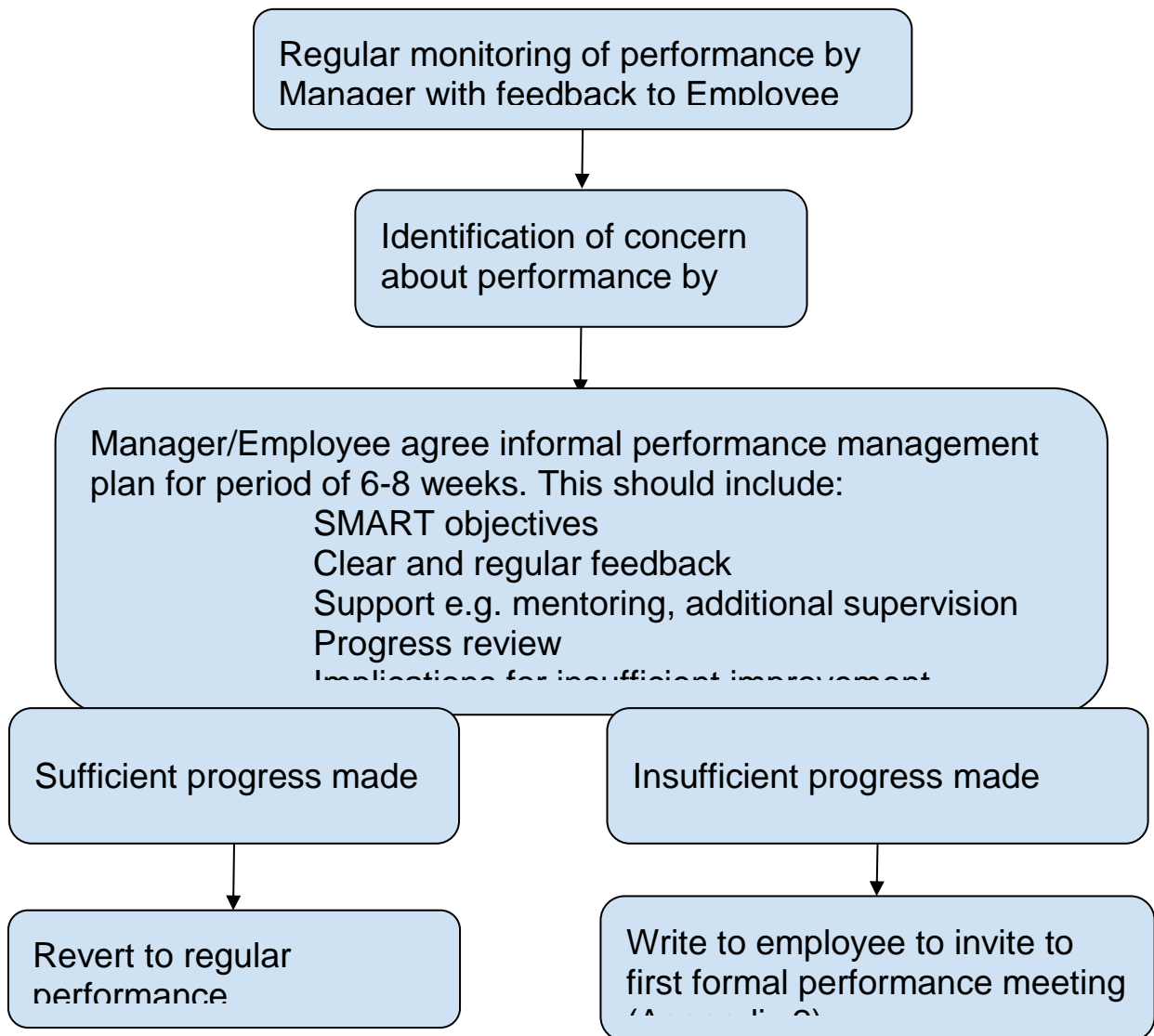
9.1 Process for Monitoring and Audit

Monitoring/audit arrangements	Methodology	Reporting		
		Source	Committee	Frequency

10.0 Associated Documentation

- Learning and Development Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Induction Policy
- Probationary Policy

Appendix One - Flow Chart for Informal Performance Management Procedure



Appendix Two - Flowchart for Managing Performance Concerns

