

STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY

Adopted by	Goring-on-Thames Parish Council
Adoption Date	[Date]
Review Frequency	Every 3 years
Next Review Date	[Date]
Responsible Committee	Staffing Committee

1. Introduction

1.1 Goring-on-Thames Parish Council (“the Council”) recognises that its employees are central to the effective delivery of council services and the achievement of the Council’s objectives.

1.2 The Council is committed to supporting employees through regular communication, constructive feedback, appropriate training and professional development.

1.3 This policy establishes a fair and consistent framework for the appraisal of all Council employees and reflects good employment practice consistent with guidance issued by:

- the National Association of Local Councils (NALC); and
- the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

2. Purpose of the Appraisal Process

2.1 The appraisal process provides an opportunity to:

- review performance and achievements during the previous year;
- discuss progress against agreed objectives;
- identify training, development and support needs;
- clarify future priorities and objectives; and
- encourage effective communication between employees and councillors.

2.2 The appraisal process is intended to be supportive and developmental. It is not a disciplinary or capability procedure.

2.3 Matters relating to serious misconduct, capability or poor performance will be managed separately through the Council’s disciplinary or capability procedures where appropriate.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all employees of the Council.

3.2 Councillors are expected to maintain confidentiality throughout the appraisal process and to comply with the Council's policies relating to employment, equality and data protection.

4. Principles

4.1 Appraisals will be:

- conducted fairly and consistently;
- evidence-based;
- confidential;
- constructive in approach; and
- focused on both performance and employee wellbeing.

4.2 The process should encourage open discussion and a shared understanding of:

- what has gone well;
- any challenges encountered;
- support required; and
- priorities for the coming year.

4.3 Employees will be encouraged to participate fully in the process and provide their own reflections and comments.

5. Appraisal Cycle

5.1 Employees will normally receive:

- one formal annual appraisal; and
- quarterly documented review discussions during the year, ideally scheduled prior to the staffing committee quarterly meeting

5.2 Annual appraisals will normally take place between November and December

5.3 Objectives may be reviewed and amended during the year to reflect operational changes, Council priorities or unforeseen circumstances.

5.4 Where an employee is absent for an extended period, including maternity leave or long-term sickness absence, reasonable adjustments may be made to the appraisal timetable and objectives.

6. Appraisers

6.1 Appraisals will normally be conducted by two councillors appointed by the Staffing Committee and the Clerk where appropriate

6.2 Appraisers should:

- prepare appropriately for the meeting;
- act impartially and professionally;
- maintain confidentiality; and
- ensure the discussion remains constructive and supportive.

6.3 Councillors involved in the appraisal process should avoid becoming involved in day-to-day operational management outside their agreed role.

6.4 Post appraisal meeting offered and to be conducted by the Chair of the Council

7. Preparation for Appraisal

7.1 Employees will receive reasonable notice of the appraisal meeting.

7.2 Prior to the meeting:

- the employee should complete a self-assessment section of the appraisal form; and
- appraisers should review previous objectives, relevant work activities and any agreed development actions.

7.3 Feedback from other councillors may be considered where appropriate and relevant.

8. The Appraisal Meeting

8.1 The appraisal meeting should take place in a private setting free from interruption.

8.2 The meeting should include discussion of:

- achievements and contributions;
- progress against objectives;
- workload and wellbeing;
- relationships and communication;
- any concerns or obstacles;
- training and development needs; and
- objectives for the coming year.

8.3 Objectives should normally be SMART:

- Specific;
- Measurable;
- Achievable;
- Relevant; and
- Time-bound.

8.4 Objectives should be proportionate to the employee's role and the Council's priorities.

9. Appraisal Records and Outcomes

9.1 A written appraisal record will be completed following the meeting.

9.2 The employee will have the opportunity to comment on the appraisal record before it is finalised.

9.3 Completed appraisal records will be treated as confidential and retained securely in accordance with the Council's data protection and records retention policies.

9.4 The Staffing Committee may make recommendations to Full Council regarding:

- training and development;
- amendments to job descriptions;
- staffing support requirements; or
- salary progression where contractually applicable.

9.5 Any recommendations to Full Council shall preserve employee confidentiality as far as reasonably practicable.

10. Appeals

10.1 If an employee believes the appraisal process has not been conducted fairly, they should first raise the matter informally with the appraisers.

10.2 If the matter remains unresolved, the employee may submit a written appeal to the Chair of the Council within 10 working days of receiving the completed appraisal record.

10.3 The appeal will normally be considered by councillors not previously involved in the appraisal process wherever practicable.

11. Review of Policy

11.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier where required due to changes in legislation, guidance or Council requirements.

APPENDIX A

STAFF APPRAISAL FORM

Employee Details

Name	
Job Title	
Appraisers	
Review Period	
Appraisal date	

1. Self Assessment

• Objective	• Progress	• Outcome/comments
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

2. Review of Previous Objectives

Objective	Progress	Outcome/comments

2. Key Achievements and Contributions

Please summarise the employee's main achievements and contributions during the review period.

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3. Workload, Support and Wellbeing

Appendix V

Please note:

- any workload pressures;
- operational challenges;
- support required; or
- wellbeing considerations relevant to the role.

4. Training and Development

Training / Development Need Agreed Action Timescale

5. Objectives for the Next Review Period

Objective	Success measure	Target date

6. Additional Comments

Employee Comments

Appraisers' Comments

7. Signatures

Name	Signature	Date
Employee		
Appraiser		
Appraiser		

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

(Not forming part of the policy)

Appendix V

- Appraisals should focus on constructive discussion and future improvement.
- Objectives should normally be limited to a manageable number.
- The process should support employee development rather than create unnecessary administrative burden.
- Appraisals should not be used as a substitute for informal communication throughout the year.
- Salary progression should only be considered where provided for within the employee's contract or adopted pay framework.