

Lancaster City Council

Employee Performance Management and Development Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are committed to ensuring that all our employees are given the opportunity to work to their full potential. We believe that it is our responsibility to provide our people with the right support so they can work at their best, which means that everyone understands what is expected of them and how they can be successful in delivering our Corporate Plan 2030.
- 1.2 Our values are at the heart of this approach and are central to how we deliver our services and work together:
 - List values when we've got them agreed
- 1.3 Our approach to performance management involves ensuring that our employees are valued and recognised by celebrating our successes, and ensuring that everyone understands how their contribution has a positive impact on the work of Lancaster City Council and how they can make that contribution impactful.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees of Lancaster City Council with a permanent or temporary contract, following successful completion of their probationary period.
- 2.2 Separate performance development conversation templates may be used for the Chief Executive, Directors, and certain groups of front line employees such as those in our Waste Services Teams, but the principles detailed in this policy remain.

3. Equality, diversity and inclusion

- 3.1 In line with all of our policies, we are committed to ensuring that every employee has equal and fair access to all development discussions and opportunities.

4. What is performance management

- 4.1 In the context of this policy, performance management refers to the way managers and employees work together to ensure that each employee is working to the best of their ability and putting our values into practice, in line with the Council's Priorities in the Corporate Plan.
- 4.2 It can include establishing objectives so everyone understands how their job role contributes to the overall plan, how we can look at improving performance through training and development, and holding people to account for their performance.
- 4.3 It is important to note that the main factor that drives effective performance management is holding regular quality conversations.

5. Principles

- 5.1 Managers are responsible for ensuring that their teams and individual team members are performing to the best of their ability. This includes having meaningful conversations with their team members in line with this policy.
- 5.2 Performance development conversations, called “Annual Conversations” (*working title*), will take place on an annual basis, with a continuous review process taking place during regular one to one meetings throughout the year.
- 5.3 The Annual Conversation will cover elements such as objective setting, providing feedback on the quality and impact of work completed, how the Council’s values and behaviours have been demonstrated and will continue to be demonstrated, whether an individual has the resources to do their work, whether the work demands are manageable, and the identification of any learning or development needs and how they will be met.
- 5.4 The emphasis of Annual Conversations will be on identifying strengths and using them as a basis for applying an individual’s ‘success formula’ to other situations and circumstances.
- 5.5 Negative performance conversations will be positively framed, with the intention being that an individual is clear on their areas for improvement and their pathway to success. Poor performance will be addressed using the Council’s Capability and Performance Improvement Policy.
- 5.6 Overall performance ratings, based on the impact an employee’s performance has had on delivering the Council’s priorities and called “Impact Ratings”, will be used to motivate employees and to encourage accountability, as well as to inform managers and the Learning and Development team how to prioritise development needs.

6. Performance Development Conversations, “Annual Conversations” (*working title*)

- 6.1 The annual Performance Development Conversation is not intended to be a one off annual event. Regular one to one conversations will always make reference to progress against the objectives set in the Annual Conversation. New objectives can be set during regular one to one meetings where they have arisen during the review year. Objectives will be set by making reference to team and service priorities, as well as the Council’s Corporate Plan 2030.
- 6.2 The Annual Conversation has a suggested template to be used as a basis for discussions. It is acknowledged that this template may not meet the requirements of all individuals, and managers and employees can decide on how best to use the template, adding or changing the discussion points as they deem most beneficial. The discussion must always include objective setting and how each individual is implementing the Council’s Values.
- 6.3 Team Check-Ins where groups of individuals come together to discuss performance and values and set objectives, may take place. Managers are trusted to decide when a private discussion with an individual may be more appropriate due to the nature of the issues. It is advised that managers wishing to solely undertake a team approach speak to their Head of Service to agree that this is the most appropriate course of action.
- 6.4 Annual Conversations are intended to be a very positive forum for honest feedback and discussion. Negative feedback can be provided to assist with development, but the Council’s Capability and Performance Improvement Policy should be used to formally address poor or low performance.

6.5 Managers will be requested to complete a short report once all of the Annual Conversations have taken place in their team, which will be shared with the Senior Leadership Team. The aim of this report is to confirm the number of Annual Conversations completed, the general themes identified, and, importantly, the potential challenges that need to be addressed in the coming year to ensure that teams can perform at their best. The report will also be an opportunity for managers to highlight corporate training or development needs so that organisation wide development interventions can be organised where possible.

6.6 Where an employee does not agree with the outcome or content of their Annual Conversation, a further discussion should be requested with their manager. If the employee remains dissatisfied then they should request a discussion with their grandparent manager, whose decision will be final.

7. Further information

7.1 Further information, including templates and guidance for managing performance, will be added to the xx intranet pages.

8. Review

8.1 This Policy will be reviewed one year after implementation, or earlier in the event of further changes in legislation. The Policy will be kept under review, so it can be refined and developed according to learning and experience, seeking feedback from involved parties on a regular basis.