



HELSEBY PARISH COUNCIL

APPRAISAL POLICY FOR COUNCIL STAFF

Version 4 – as adopted by the Council on 11 November 2024
Next Committee review due: November 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Helsby Parish Council currently has one employee: the Parish Clerk, who also performs the role of Responsible Financial Officer.
- 1.2. The Council recognises the importance of its employees. Regularly communicating job expectations and supporting staff development is critical for achieving a motivated and capable workforce.

2. Purpose of Appraisal

- 2.1. The appraisal process provides an opportunity for the Council's staff to discuss performance against set objectives and examine their personal development within the organisation.
- 2.2. Furthermore, by auditing the strengths and weaknesses of the role, suggestions for improvement can be made to the Council.
- 2.3. This appraisal policy is designed to be a developmental tool and should not be judgemental. Any comments made by the appraiser or employee are to be constructive to improve performance and should not be seen as a personal criticism.
- 2.4. As per Standing Order 19(h) (Handling Staff Matters) a review of the terms and conditions of service of existing employees will be carried out at the Full Council meeting each December.

3. The Appraisal Cycle

- 3.1. The appraisal cycle will include one formal annual performance review but should also include a half yearly informal review together with ongoing feedback throughout the year. Appraisals will normally be held in late November/early December.

- 3.2. Where it is known that an employee is due to commence a long period of absence, e.g. maternity leave, this will be factored into the objective timescales and where appropriate an appraisal will be held before the absence starts.

4. The Appraiser(s)

- 4.1. The Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Council will conduct the appraisal process with the Clerk.

5. Preparing for the Appraisal

- 5.1. The Clerk is responsible for setting the dates for the formal appraisal meetings. To assist the process, the appraisee should complete the "Preparation for Appraisal: Appraisee" form (see Appendix 1). This form is intended to support the process and will not necessarily form part of the finished appraisal documentation. The appraiser(s) will prepare for the appraisal by completing the "Preparation for Appraisal: Appraiser" form to which other Councillors can have an input before the appraisal meeting (see Appendix 2). This form is also intended to support the process and will not necessarily form part of the finished appraisal documentation.

6. Conducting the appraisal meeting

- 6.1. The appraisal discussion will allow an opportunity to reflect and comment on the previous year's objectives and delivery of the workplan (linked to job descriptions and Council aims). It will praise achievement, identify areas where further support or development is required and encourage the employee in their role. Where possible or applicable, targets set from the previous year should be reviewed at this meeting.
- 6.2. The meeting should be held in a confidential environment that is free from interruption.
- 6.3. Councillors and employees are asked to support any comments and opinions with factual examples and evidence, if necessary.
- 6.4. The following will be key features of the appraisal:
 - Agreement of the purpose of the process
 - Joint review of performance evidence- which should include what outcomes have been achieved and how they have impacted the community and the Council
 - Discussion of achievements and concerns
 - Identification of areas for development and improvement
 - Review of job description (if applicable)
 - Setting objectives for the forthcoming year (no limit on number but must be SMART)
 - Training and development needs

- 6.5. Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-limited).
- 6.6. The results of the appraisal process will be recorded on the Performance Appraisal form (see Appendix 3). Copies of the forms will be kept securely by both appraiser and Clerk.

7. After the Appraisal Meeting

- 7.1. Following the meeting the appraiser(s) will write up the Performance Appraisal Form. The form will be given to the employee for them to complete with their comments (it is important for the employee to express their views on the appraisal).
- 7.2. The Chair or Vice Chair of the Council should inform the Council of the outcome of the appraisal, in particular any outstanding achievements or issues around performance, and seek approval for pay progression as per the Clerk's contract.
- 7.3. The final version of the appraisal form (marked confidential) will be copied to the employee and another copy will be held on the employee's personal file.
- 7.4. The Chair or Vice Chair of the Council and Clerk will ensure any training, development and support requirements identified in the appraisal are considered.

8. Appeal

- 8.1. Should an employee believe that they have not received a fair appraisal they should make this comment on the form and discuss the issue with the Councillor(s) who conducted the appraisal.
- 8.2. Should they still remain dissatisfied, they have the right of appeal to Full Council, within 10 working days of the final appraisal form being returned. Their grounds for appeal should be fully outlined in writing to the Chair.

Appendix 1: Preparation for Appraisal: Appraisee form

Name:

Role:

Appraisal Date:

1. What have you achieved this year? (consider your objectives/workplan)

2. What aspects of the role you feel you do well?

3. Are there aspects of the role you find difficult/problematic?

4. How might any such difficulties/problems be overcome?

5. What training (if any) do you feel you need?

6. What further support (if any) do you feel you need?

7. What areas do you think will be your main objectives in the next six to 12 months?

Appendix 2: Preparation for Appraisal: Appraiser form

Appraiser Name:

Appraisal Date:

Note: all councillors, not just those carrying out the appraisal, could contribute to these answers which are intended to inform the discussion at the appraisal meeting.

1. What are the Council's main requirements of the role? (needs to align with the Job Description) and objectives for the year being reviewed?

2. What are the employee's strengths/accomplishments in relation to this role? And performance this year?

3. Are there any problems/difficulties? (be prepared to cite examples and evaluate performance against objectives)

4. What are the main objectives/workplan of the Council for the next year?

5. How do you think the employee can help the Council to achieve these objectives?

Appendix 3: Performance Appraisal Form

Appraisee: **Signature:**

Appraiser/s: **Signature:**

Appraisal review period:

Appraisal meeting date:

1. Identify the key areas of the role

2. Review performance against objectives, achievements and concerns during the appraisal review period

3. In the light of this appraisal, identify any changes to the key areas of the role and make recommendations for any appropriate amendments

4. Identify the main objectives for the next 12 months including future development and training

5. Summary

6. Appraisee's Comments

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