

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 2 July 2018

Report Title: 1-1 conversation performance management toolkit

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Purpose of Report

To provide Cabinet with a 1-1 conversation strengths based performance and talent management approach plus a values and behavioural framework.

This is aimed at ensuring we have the right people with the right skills with the right behaviours to meet future challenges.

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet are asked to consider and approve the implementation of the proposed 1-1 strengths management approach and values and behaviours framework.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Council's established appraisal process system has been in place for more than ten years and during this period feedback from managers and staff has been mixed.

The aim of the 1-1 performance and talent management approach is to improve the working relationships between a manager and individual. In addition, it enables the council to have a transparent and open approach to development and talent management which ensures consistency of approach across the organisation.

Managers currently hold 1-1 meetings with individuals and recent research supports this approach as it has been shown to improve performance and make staff feel more engaged and valued.

The inclusion of our values and behavioural framework alongside the 1-1 performance approach provides a clear picture of how we expect our staff to behave with internal and external customers and each other and is an easy reference tool to aid discussion on things that have gone well and what can be improved.

The proposed performance management approach will also play a significant part in embedding our 'one team-one council' approach'.

Introduction

The council intends to create an agile workplace that can help achieve goals set out in the corporate plan skilled for the future, motivated and engaged to deliver for the people of Hastings.

We will develop the right people, with the right skills, in the right place so that we can deliver our goals as set out in the corporate plan and be ready for the future. This will be achieved through the introduction of strengths' based 1-1 conversations performance management approach.

The aim is to develop a workforce committed to our organisations values and who display the behaviours required for 'one team'.

Background

The Council has an established appraisal system which helps the organisation to manage the performance and development of its staff. With the right preparation an appraisal can have a positive impact on employee's levels of engagement and productivity.

The present system has been in place for over 10 years and during this period feedback on the process has been mixed.

It is proposed to introduce a new approach to appraisals which moves away from a traditional twice yearly review of performance to a series of continuous conversations, where a review of performance and behaviours are discussed as often as required culminating in a full year review.

The 1-1 conversation performance approach will be used more to plot individual performance based on achievement of objectives, values and behaviours exhibited.

The data collected will inform our workforce planning agenda at both local and corporate level and will help target our approach to succession planning, talent management and learning and development.

To support the new system a guide has been developed and will be made available once approved. Specific training will be held throughout September 2018 for managers and staff.

The 1-1 conversations, values and behavioural framework performance management approach is an essential management tool to help us identify and manage all levels of performance from the new member of staff with scope for improvement through to high potential ready to go further – move onto more senior roles when they become available.

Why Change?

The new approach requires managers to focus on individuals' strengths and reduces the focus on the annual appraisals. The annual appraisal more often than not focuses on identifying and discussing areas of weaknesses in employees with emphasis on where they need to improve rather than what they are good at.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development undertook research in November 2017 on Strengths-based Performance Conversations. Their most important finding was the positive impact on how useful employees believe performance conversations with their managers are.

This something that Hastings Borough Council should choose to emulate.

A strengths based performance approach does not mean that poor performance should be ignored. However, managers need to be realistic about how far an employee can improve in an area where their performance is weaker. A heavy emphasis on negative feedback will leave staff feeling undervalued and demotivated. However, individuals feel motivated when they are positively stretched, doing work that energises them and where they feel supported by their managers and others. It is important to remember that recognition is an important human need – everyone wants to feel appreciated.

Research shows that overdone strengths frequently result in performance shortfalls. The strengths based performance approach helps managers address strengths used in the wrong way or at the wrong time which can undermine performance. For example, attention to detail when overdone can become perfectionism and self-confidence can become arrogance.

Also a strengths based performance approach is the best way to help people change habits that are undermining their performance. Managers have an important part to play in helping individuals to understand their strengths by using the toolkit. When individuals understand their strengths they can learn ways to change habits that are less natural to an individual.

Regular 1-1 conversations

In addition to the full year review meeting, the new performance management approach strongly recommends managers hold regular one to one conversations to review progress and give feedback on performance against the behaviours framework and objectives set. The timing of these meetings will vary depending on the individual as some may need more 1-1 time because they are new to their role or because they work better with more coaching/direction. The conversation will help reduce uncertainty, resolve problems, build trust and rapport, which in turn will strengthen manager/employee relations and improve work performance.

The timing of 1-1's should be discussed and agreed between the line manager and the individual concerned.

Benchmarking and performance review meetings

The proposed performance management approach will enable us to also address the issue of succession planning and talent management. Making talent management work in an organisation requires a level of commitment from managers. Its success depends on developing a talent management 'mind-set' and a transparent process throughout the organisation.

To ensure transparency there will be benchmarking meetings held by the directors, assistant directors and corporate services senior managers. These meetings are intended to encourage greater visibility of employees' performance across the organisation and of the actions being taken to develop employees. This process also enables managers' to place the performance of individuals in the context of a broader range of employees. This also ensures that individuals are not impacted on due to managers adopting different approaches to using the performance assessment standards.

The benchmarking meetings should be held between directors, assistant directors and corporate services senior leads before they meet with their direct reports and should be held before managers hold full year review meetings with team members.

Conclusion

The success of the performance, behaviour and talent management approach is dependent on people management skills of line managers and their experience of coaching, developing and managing performance of their staff. Line managers need HR support and development to fulfil this role successfully. They need to be clear about how they talk to their staff about their perceived potential. But line managers can also be extremely powerful in blocking the talent pipeline by hanging on to individuals' who boost a department's performance. The proposed approach is intended to improve the mobility of talent for the benefit of the whole organisation and is a significant move towards our project management 'one team' flexible working approach.

Timetable of Next Steps

- Please include a list of key actions and the scheduled dates for these:

Action	Key milestone	Due date (provisional)	Responsible
Staff and Management Working Group	TU consulted and new performance management approach approved.	First week in July – 2 – 6.07.2018	Verna Connolly
Introduction and overview of new performance management approach for all Managers and staff	Briefings completed.	30.09.2018 (QTR 2)	Verna Connolly
1-1's recorded on HR ERP system	Number of 1-1's dependent on agreed timeframes between managers' and individuals	During QTR 3 – reviewed 5.01.2019 (QTR 4)	Verna Connolly
Review Board established	Members agreed. Dates for review meetings diarised for March 2019.	31.08.2018	Verna Connolly

Wards Affected

N/A

Implications

Relevant project tools applied? Yes

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness

Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)

Risk Management

Environmental Issues

Economic/Financial Implications

Human Rights Act

Organisational Consequences Yes

Local People's Views

Anti-Poverty

Additional Information

Appendices:

1. Values and Behavioural Framework May 2018
2. 1-1 Performance and Development Toolkit, May 2018
3. 1-1 Conversation record form

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