

# The Bexley Performance Management Scheme

**HR Service  
April 2017**



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY – THE BEXLEY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCHEME**

### **1. The Benefits of the Performance Management Scheme**

London Borough of Bexley operates a performance management scheme to ensure that all individuals understand how their work contributes to achieving organisational priorities and goals. It ensures that individuals are clear about their specific goals and accountabilities and how their performance will be measured. It also decides how individuals should be rewarded for their achievements, taking into account the financial and other circumstances of the Council.

The scheme:

- Ensures each individual knows what is expected of them in their role through effective goal setting and being clear about what they are accountable for and how their performance will be measured, including how well they have met the organisation values and behaviour expectations for their role.
- Determines whether individuals meet the criteria to receive a bonus or increment in recognition of their achievements during the year
- Reviews individuals' performance on a regular basis.
- Identifies what support and development the individual needs to ensure success.
- Provides a formal mechanism for two way feedback between the individual and their line manager.

Our performance management scheme is vital to drive high performance and its focus is on creating opportunities for line managers and individuals to reflect on the impact of their effectors and improve how they deliver their services. These arrangements are also used to determine any financial rewards for excellent performance.

### **2. The Process to be followed**

Regular 1:1 performance review meetings or supervision between the line manager and their members of staff are at the heart of the scheme. The outcomes of these meetings result in shared understanding of progress, identification of achievements and any gaps, with action planning to ensure progress going forward, and a review of objectives.

The information gathered and recorded at these meetings feeds into an annual assessment of performance and is evidence to support the final performance ratings.

The appraisal year and our performance planning process is based on the financial year. **Appendix 1** summarises the details of the timeline. The following are the key steps.

#### **Step 1 Service Planning**

Bexley's Business Process is the Council's approach to business planning. This process starts in October when Directors and Deputy Directors work with members to identify council wide priorities and the outcomes we want to deliver. This process is aligned to the financial planning timetable and the priorities are translated into objectives and actions between January and March when senior managers and their teams develop service and team plans.

## Step 2 Performance Conversation

Following completion of these plans each employee has a 1:1 discussion with their line manager during April/May. These discussions are designed to ensure:

### Step 1

#### A review and assessment of performance from the previous year - The Retro

This review will be informed by the evidence collected at regular 1:1 discussions and covers achievement of goals, delivery of accountabilities, demonstration of values and any learning and development all within the context of the Job family for the role. Details of the job families are included in **Appendix 2**. The focus will be on what has gone well, what has not gone as planned and any adjustments that are needed to ensure success in the future. This part of the discussion should account for 20% of the overall conversation. A review of the progress records completed during the year at regular 1:1's will enable an informed assessment of performance. The template on [Myview](#) will guide the manager through the conversation.

#### Recording the outcome of the discussion.

For the purpose of consistency across the organisation a summary of this aspect of the conversation must be recorded on [Myview](#) along with any recommendation for Performance Related Pay. This can be completed after **step 2** so that the conversation is not interrupted. Recommendations for performance related pay awards should not be disclosed to individuals until the review process described below has been fully completed.

In considering whether an increment or bonus should be awarded, line managers will consider to what extent they believe the individual has satisfied the criteria set out in the table below.

The table is designed to assist managers in determining whether PrP should be recommended for individuals. Managers will need to consider not just whether key objectives have been achieved but the manner of **how** they have been achieved. Performance will be assessed against all areas of job accountability, even if not specifically referred to in the goals and against the values and expectation alongside professional/technical capabilities required for the role.

The benchmark against which performance is judged must recognise the Council's need to balance affordability with the priority that the Council gives to delivering excellent services to residents. Awards should only be recommended when clear and consistent evidence can be produced to justify a Performance Rating of 1 or a Bonus.

The performance ratings are described below:

Performance Ratings		Increment
<b>1</b>	<b>Excellent</b> Overall performance materially exceeds requirements. The employee's performance and associated behaviours provide an excellent model for others.	✓
<b>2</b>	<b>Fully Proficient</b> Overall performance consistently fulfils requirements. The employee is proficient in achieving not only their objectives but also the expected behaviours as defined in the High Performance Indicators.	X
<b>3</b>	<b>Performance below the required standard</b> Performance falls below requirements either overall or in one or more respect. Improvement is required.	X

**Performance below the required standard:** If performance is assessed as being below the required standard then the individual and line manager must be clear about how performance fell short of what was anticipated and record this. This might include not meeting accountabilities, or not satisfying the way of working set out in the values and expectations.

Any line manager who considers that performance is falling below the required standard should at the earliest stage possible make sure that the requirements are clearly defined and understood by their member of staff, that sufficient time is given to master new accountabilities and that appropriate development and support is provided. If these steps have been taken, then it is appropriate to consider if formal capability procedures should apply.

## **Bonus Payments**

A bonus payment of 5% of the grade rate may be awarded where overall performance fulfils job requirements and, in addition, the employee has demonstrated exceptional performance for the benefit of the Council or its residents in the appraisal year.

The manager is then required to complete the relevant form on [Myview](#) which will be forwarded to the grandparent for their consideration. The grandparent is the line manager of the individual's manager. The main role of the grandparent is to ensure consistency and fairness in objective setting, assessment of performance and in recommendations for the award of increments or bonuses.

## **Step 2**

### **Agreement of a plan for the forthcoming year - The Future**

This aspect of the discussion focuses on the future role of the individual, their goals/objectives, the accountabilities they are responsible for, how they will demonstrate the values and the performance expectations and any the measures of success. The London Borough of Bexley's Performance Assessment Each role is aligned to a job family to ensure consistency of expectation across the organisation. The expectations should be applied within the scope and span of the job family role. Details of the job families can be found in **Appendix 2**.

The setting of the future plan at the start of the financial year provides an agreed and accepted basis for reviewing and discussing performance results. They reduce misunderstandings between the manager and the employee about what performance outcomes are expected. They specify each employee's role in accomplishing things that are important for the team, department and the Council. In addition, they help the employee to self-monitor progress by providing clear performance targets.

Guidance to help in defining objectives is set out in **Appendix 3**.

### **Agreement of the support including learning and development required to ensure that the objectives are met**

This element of the discussion will focus on any personal development, support from the line manager or other team members, or any issues that need to be addressed to ensure success. This is also an opportunity to consider what may prevent the successful delivery of the goal/objective and for the individual and the line manager to plan how to mitigate any risks. It is likely that this will include:

- Personal development related to a particular objective or behaviour expectations
- Agreeing the frequency of progress reviews – regular meetings between individuals and their managers to discuss progress should be taking place and these will inform the final appraisal discussion.
- Opportunities to work with other colleagues to develop knowledge or confidence in undertaking new duties or ways of working.

- Aspects of the working relationship between the individual and their line manager
- Aspects of the working arrangements across the wider team.
- Relationships with other teams.
- Opportunities for learning and skills development that exist in Everyday experiences.

Any development that is agreed must be realistic and affordable, with clear timescales and an agreed approach as to how development needs will be achieved. It should also take into account any local priorities for development.

Both parts of **step 2** should account for 80% of the overall conversation. The template on [Myview](#) will guide the manager through this aspect of the conversation.

### **The form**

A templates to help guide both parties through the conversation is available on [Myview](#).

**The Retro** part of the form focusses on capturing a shared understanding of the last year using evidence from regular 1:1's and the progress reviews on a quarterly basis. It will also consider how the individual has demonstrated the values and behaviours alongside any new skills that the person has gained through both formal learning and informal learning.

**The Future** part of the form is to be used to briefly describe each goal and accountability for the next period, when it should be met or accomplished and how success will be measured. It will also consider how the values and expectations will be 'lived' to increase value and positive impact for our residents. This should also reflect any professional/technical standards the fit with the role.

Finally the future element should consider what support, development, monitoring and forward planning needs to take place to ensure the successful delivery of the outcomes.

### **Reviewing progress during the appraisal year**

Regular 1:1 meetings should be scheduled well in advance, and at least every three months, with a formal record of progress in June/July, September/October and December/January. There is space on the template to do this. The timescale and frequency of the 1:1's should reflect the needs of the individual, nature of goals agreed and the likelihood and impact of any risks associated with the delivery of the objective. The meetings should be a balance between reviewing progress against the tasks, reflecting on the values and behaviour expectations and also exploring any issues that may affect future success.

It is an opportunity to note good performance and to address shortfalls in performance.

### **Step 3 - Review of recommendations**

All PrP recommendations will be reviewed by the relevant Deputy Director, by management teams and Management Board as considered appropriate by the Chief Executive. The review will consider whether awards are appropriate and justifiable and reflect a proper application of the scheme in all the circumstances. The review will also seek to ensure that recommendations re fair and equitable across all individuals and service areas.

### **3. Guidance on the Scheme**

Guidance on the scheme is available through the Senior HR Advisors or the OD Service. Notes on how to get the best out of performance management conversations are in **Appendix 4**.

### **4. The Appeals Procedure**

The Appeals Procedure is set out at **Appendix 6**.

### **5. Eligibility for inclusion in the scheme**

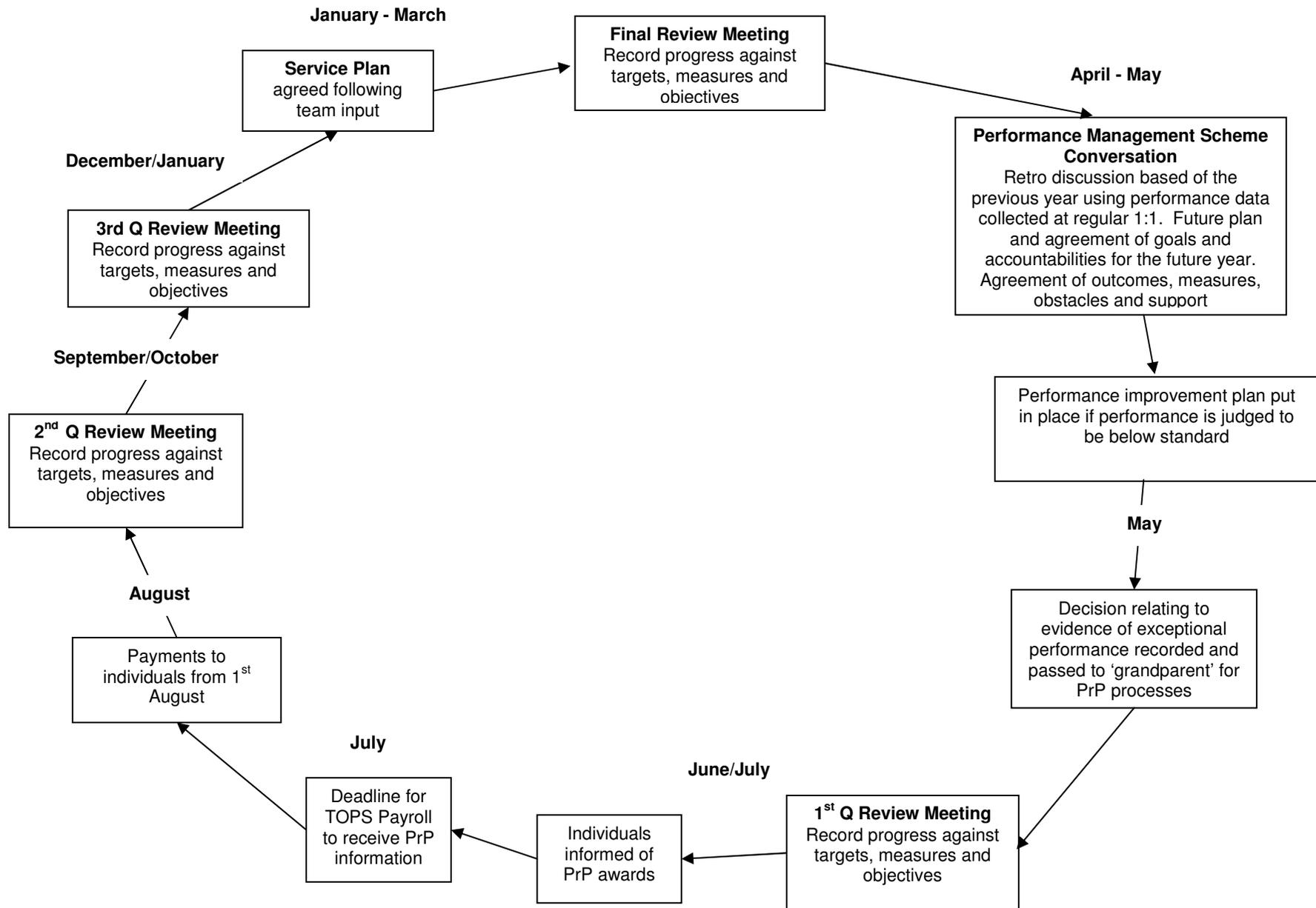
Individuals will be managed using the performance management scheme immediately they commence employment in post. Performance management meetings during the probationary period take place after 4 weeks, 3 months and 5 months to provide support, guidance and monitoring during the first 6 months of employment with Bexley. After this time, the normal performance management timetable is used. The key goals/objectives and measures including the behaviours set shall be those normally agreed for a full 12 month assessment period and will necessarily mean that opportunities to earn PrP (Performance Related Pay) in the first appraisal year cycle will be less than if a full year has been worked.

### **6. Arrangements for members of the Management Board**

Members of Management Board are appraised by the Chief Executive whose recommendations are considered by a Member Panel appointed for the purpose of determining any awards.

Appeals against that Panel's decision are to the Member Employee Appeals Panel.

**Performance Management Timeline**



**Appendix 2  
Job Family Definitions**

Job Family Name	Definition	Types of Role and Typical Grades
1. Top Management	Posts in this job family will reflect the most senior management level within the Council from the level of Deputy Director upwards. These jobs will have strategic responsibility for a significant area of the Council's work normally covering a number of service areas.	CE, Directors, Deputy Directors
2. Heads of Service	Posts in this job family will report to a Deputy Director/Director. These jobs will be responsible for the strategy and direction of a main service area normally covering a number of disciplines.	Heads of Service
3. Professional 1	Posts in this job family will require an experienced/ seasoned professional. The main focus of these jobs will be on the provision of expert professional intervention and advice across a broad range of subjects within the professional discipline. Management responsibilities may also be held.	Senior lawyer, Practice Manager, Senior Engineer, Group Accountant, Development Managers (CYPS), Educational Psychologist, Advisory Teacher
4. Professional 2	Posts in this job family require a professional background and will include post qualifying entry level posts. These jobs will provide professional services within a defined discipline and may refer to professional 1 jobs for advice on more complex matters.	Senior Social Workers, Social Workers, Teacher, Legal Officers, Planning Officers, Surveyors, Accountants, Librarians
5. Management 1	Posts in this job family will normally require professional expertise but the focus will be the achievement of results through the management of others. These jobs will manage a unit or section delivering a main service area.	Unit Manager, Department head, Group Manager, Head of Committee / Elections, Integrated team Managers
6. Management 2	Posts in this job family will focus on the achievement of results through the management of others and may require some professional expertise. These jobs will manage a discreet service area.	Payments Manager, Office Manager, Area Surveyor, Senior Client Advisor, Waste Manager, Outdoor Recreation Manager, Payroll Team Leader

7. Supervisor	Posts in this job family will achieve results through personal delivery but will include day to day supervision of other staff.	Supervisory Roles
8. Customer Facing	Posts in this job family will provide direct services to customers and achieve results through personal delivery. These jobs will not hold day to day supervisory responsibilities but may hold a case load or provide direct customer facing services to the public.	EWO's, Customer Contact Advisers, LSA's, SWA's, Receptionists, Library Assistants, SCP's, Support assistants
9. Senior Support Staff	Posts in this job family provide more complex support to other Council staff, which may include a good understanding of the political nature of the organisation	Member Support, Graphic designers, Communications,
10. Support Staff	Posts in this job family will provide support and ancillary services to other Council staff under close direction.	General Admin, Clerical, Filing, Scanning, Post Room Staff, Messengers, Drivers, Caretakers, Cleaners

## 1. Types of objectives

Objectives are used to describe what it is that individuals are required to achieve within their role across a specific period of time. There are a number of ways that these requirements can be expressed and below are some examples of the types of objectives managers could consider. It is important to make the objective meaningful and appropriate for the employee's specific job for the upcoming performance period.

- **Short range objectives** can generally be accomplished within appraisal year.
- **Long range objectives** might require a full appraisal year or longer to complete and may be split into two or three objectives, or spread over several 'milestones'.
- **Organisational objectives** contribute directly to the wider organisation (such as establishing new ways of working within a team or department)
- **Problem-solving objectives** can be set to improve performance that has slipped below acceptable levels.
- **Innovation objectives** are created to stimulate creativity or new thinking, or take a fresh approach.
- **Personal development objectives** are meant to enhance the employee's development and their long-term performance results.

## 2. Making objectives SMART

What ever the type of objective they should be **SMART**:

**S – Specific:** The accountability or goal clear must be clear to both parties so that they know what is expected.

**M – Measurable:** This needs to enable both the individual and the line manager to determine whether the activity took place and how well it was done.

**A – Achievable:** The accountability or goal must be within the individuals control and can be achieved in a reasonable amount of time.

**R – Relevant:** Each accountability or goal should be related directly to the job, departmental objective, organisational outcome or strategic plan

**T – Time Based:** Both parties should be able to track progress against specific target dates and timescales

## 3. Making objectives measurable

**Performance expectations** specify the ways that both parties can measure whether the goals or objectives have been reached and how well activities have been performed. They are the 'how' or 'how well' of the objective. These will include:

**Quality:** How well an activity is performance or to what standard the task is completed. This includes accuracy, appearance of work, usefulness, effectiveness and impact.

**Quantity:** How much or how many of the results are produced or performed. Numbers or percentages may be used to measure quantity. There may be systems in place to ensure quantity standards are accurately tracked and measured.

**Timeliness:** How fast a result is produced or performed.

**Manner:** The way or style in which a task is performed or produced. This should include our HPI's and any professional/technical capabilities required.

**Method:** The polices, procedures and technical considerations that are applied to complete the task.

**Cost:** The effective use of resources including human, organisational and physical resources to complete the task.

## **Getting the best out of Performance Management Discussions**

### **1. Preparation for the discussion is the key to success**

Both parties should prepare in advance of discussion relating to performance if a successful outcome is to be achieved. This should include reflecting on what has gone well, what has not gone as well as anticipated, what factors have affected performance both those within and outside of the individuals control, ideas on how performance can be improved and high performance built on.

The manager should:

- Consider how well the individual has performed since the last meeting. Assessment should be against agreed targets and objectives
- Think about the feedback to be given at the meeting and the evidence that will be used to support it.
- Review the factors that have affected performance both those within and outside the individual's control.
- Consider the points for discussion on the possible actions that can be taken by both parties to develop or improve performance

The individual should be encouraged to assess and analyse their own performance as a basis for discussion and action. They should consider the following points:

- What they have achieved during the review period, with examples and evidence.
- Any examples of objectives not achieved with explanations.
- Any aspect of the work in which development is required and how this might be achieved.
- What level of support and guidance they require from their line managers

### **2. Getting the best from the discussion**

A good and constructive performance management discussion is one in which:

- The individuals do most of the talking.
- Managers listen actively to what they say.
- There is scope for reflection and analysis.
- Performance is analysed not personality.
- The whole period is reviewed and not just recent or isolated events.
- Achievement is recognised and reinforced.
- Ends positively with agreed action plans.

A bad discussion:

- Focuses on a catalogue of failures and omissions.
- Is controlled by the manager.
- Ends in disagreement between both parties.

**This is about exchanging views** – a frank exchange of views about what has happened, how the individual can improve their performance, the support they need from their managers to achieve this.

### 3. The role of the manager

The role of the line manager during performance management discussion is to ask the right questions, listen actively and provide feedback.

**Open questions** are general rather than specific; they enable people to decide how they should be answered and encourage them to talk freely. Examples include:

How do you feel things have been going?  
How do you see the job developing?  
How do you feel about that?  
Tell me, why do you think that happened?

Probing questions dig deeper for more specific information on what happened or why. They should support the individual's answer and encourage them to provide more information about their feelings and attitudes and they can also be used to reflect back to the individual and check information. Examples would be:

That's very interesting. Tell me more about ...?  
To what extent do you think that ...?  
Have I got the right impression? Do you mean that ...?

#### **Good listeners:**

- Concentrate on the speakers and are aware of behaviour, body language and nuances that supplement what is being said.
- Respond quickly when necessary but don't interrupt.
- Ask relevant questions to clarify meaning.
- Comment on points to demonstrate understanding but keep them short and do not inhibit the flow of the speaker.

**Feedback** should be based on facts not subjective opinion and should always be backed up with evidence and examples. The aim of feedback should be to promote the understanding of the individual so that they are aware of the impact of their actions and behaviour. It may require some corrective action where the feedback indicates that something has gone wrong. However, where possible feedback should be used positively to reinforce the good and identify opportunities for further positive action. Feedback will work best when the following conditions are met:

- Feedback is related to actual events, observed behaviours or actions.
- Feedback is built in to readily available information on the individual's performance and progress.
- Feedback describes events without judging them.
- Feedback is accompanied by questions soliciting the individual's opinion why certain things happened.
- People are encouraged to come to their own conclusions about what happened and why.

- There is understanding about what things went wrong and emphasis on putting them right for the future.
- Feedback is about Positive reinforcement – emphasising what has been done well and making constructive criticism about what might be improved.

#### **4. Managing performance**

This is the most important element of the performance management scheme. Both parties need to communicate about performance expectations, to provide feedback to each other and to identify ways to maintain high performance or improve if problems occur.

##### **The individual's responsibilities**

- Committing to goal achievement
- Soliciting performance feedback and coaching at regular 1:1 meetings
- Communicating openly and regularly with the manager
- Collecting and sharing performance data at least quarterly
- Preparing for performance reviews

##### **The manager's responsibility**

- Creating conditions that generate motivation
- Observing and documenting performance at least quarterly
- Update, revise initial objectives, performance standards and relevant HPI's
- Providing feedback and coaching through regular 1:1 meetings
- Coaching for improved performance
- Providing developmental experiences
- Reinforcing effective behaviour and progress towards objectives

## **Appeals Procedure**

### **1 Grounds for appeal**

The appeals procedure is only concerned with matters specific to the individual and which relate to their final assessment. Two grounds of appeal are allowed:

- (i) that the content of the relevant documentation does not accurately reflect the year's performance.
- (iii) that the award is inconsistent with the documentation.

The appeal must be submitted in writing to the "grandparent" under the scheme within ten working days of the individual being formally notified of the decision arising from the annual performance management assessment.

An appeal may be lodged by the individual or on their behalf by an appropriate trade union. Anyone has the right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a fellow worker or trade union representative.

### **2 Appeal Hearing**

The appeal will generally be heard by the manager of the "grandparent" or another manager at an equivalent level to the grandparent. A Human Resources Adviser will also attend the appeal hearing.

The manager hearing the appeal will hear the case from the individual or their representative, and the response from management.

The manager's decision will be made in writing within five working days of the date of the hearing. The decision reached will be final.

The timescales contained within this appeals procedure may be varied by mutual consent, for example where the manager hearing an appeal needs to undertake further investigations that cannot be completed within the timescale prescribed. Details of any extension will be communicated to the individual and (where applicable) their representative.

### **4 Appeals for members of Management Board**

Separate appeal arrangements apply for members of Management Board. These are available from Democratic Services.