

# Cumberland Employee Appraisal

## Manager Guidance

We recognise that our employees are integral to achieving our council priorities, vision, values and target operating model. Everyone needs to be able to perform to their best and have the opportunity to learn, grow and progress in their careers and feel valued for their contribution to the overall success of the council. In order to thrive at work, all employees need to be involved in **regular** strength-based conversations with their manager throughout the year about the work they do, how they feel about it and where they may need help, support and guidance.

The Cumberland employee appraisal process provides a simple structure to support an annual review and summary of these regular conversations, capture progress and achievement against personal, team and service priorities and look towards new ones for the following 12 months.

By holding regular conversations with your team members you will be able to provide positive and constructive feedback - any praise for work well done or constructive feedback should be given in the moment and not stored for the next annual summary. Nothing in these conversations should be a surprise and do not replace or prevent regular one to one conversations.

This appraisal process replaces all previous appraisal systems in the legacy councils.

The appraisal process aims to:

- Ensure all employees understand and are engaged with Cumberland Council's values and Operating Model and how these underpin and link to their role.
- Provide an opportunity to check in on health and wellbeing.
- Ensure all employees feel included, valued and supported in delivering against council priorities.
- Provide quality time to reflect on what has been achieved, is progressing well, could be even better and how.
- Encourage ownership of work and development, seeking solutions and opportunities to further improve practice.

### The essentials:

#### Preparation before the discussion:

Agree and schedule a place and time to meet which is somewhere you both feel comfortable and will be free from interruptions. Whilst face to face is preferable for these conversations, effective conversations can be held on Teams and supports effective use of time.

Prepare for the conversation, making a note of anything you want to talk about, using the sections on the Appraisal Conversation Template as a guide.

We recommend using the appraisal conversation template to guide and record your regular conversations and use these to refer back to in preparation for the annual summary review.

## **During the discussion**

Employees and line managers should work collaboratively to ensure that 121 and annual appraisal conversations take place and are both productive and supportive. The conversation should be two-way, providing a balance of feedback, active listening and an opportunity for employees to talk. Make notes of key points for reference in future conversations.

The more we have these conversations, the more they will flow - the conversation template does not have to be followed in prescriptive order - the more you know and understand your team members, you will know what motivates and encourages them.

## **Ending the discussion**

Share your notes of the conversation with your employee on the conversation template.

Wherever possible, take time to schedule the next conversation so it is in the diary and employees feel appreciated and valued.

## **Recording Completion on the Employee Appraisal Completion Form**

The annual appraisal summary must be recorded by completing the Employee Appraisal Completion Form on the conversation template – this acts as both an electronic recording of the date of completion and, where identified, you can log any additional development needs identified as part of the annual summary process.

## **The Cumberland Staff Appraisal Conversation Template**

The sections of the template are designed to cover the key areas of discussion, however, managers should not feel limited by the questions and can adapt them to suit the employee and circumstances.

### **Section one - Discussion on general wellbeing (Discussion on workload/personal pressures, your individual support needs, solutions and signposting)**

Aimed at being an open discussion to understand the general health and wellbeing of the employee and to provide opportunities to offer support and/or signposting to wellbeing resources and services [Looking after your wellbeing \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com). It also provides an opportunity to discuss and/or review any reasonable adjustments:

- How are you? How are you really?
- How are things going?
- Anything causing you concern at the moment that we can support you with?
- How does the balance between work and home feel?
- What do you do to help manage your own health and wellbeing?

### **Section two - Our Cumberland Values - Tell me about how you have demonstrated some/all our values.**

**What insight did you gain from this? Did you experience any barriers and how did you overcome them?**

Our values are the golden thread underpinning everything we do. It may be useful to initially have a discussion on the values and what they mean to the employee and how they resonate with their

own values. This will help with further conversations as to how they are bringing our values to life in their everyday work and provide opportunities to discuss where they may be coming across barriers or issues to doing so.

Examples could include:

- If the employee is a Change Champion what has been their involvement? Has it enabled them to **collaborate** with new colleagues from other teams and services? What benefits has this brought? Do they feel more **empowered** as a result?
- Has the employee been involved in a particular task or project which has demonstrated an **innovative** approach/way of working to achieve the result? How did they approach this? What did they learn and what are their reflections?
- Have they shown **compassion** during the course of their work? What were the circumstances? Has this made them even more **ambitious** for the development of the service?

### **Section three - Career aspirations/Areas of interest: Is there a particular area or initiative that you have a personal interest in? How do you think you could get more involved in this? How can your role be supported?**

Our values and target operating model seek to encourage collaboration, working across the council and with our stakeholders to achieve excellent services and improve the health and wellbeing of all residents of Cumberland. Our employees should be encouraged to be curious and ambitious regarding developing their own skills and experiences and in developing the services of the council.

This section is encouraging conversations regarding how employees can and should be interested in how they can learn about and from other teams and services, share good practice and learning, develop their own skills and competence. This will be different for individuals and provides an opportunity for discussion about their wider interests and aspirations and, in some cases, may also support employee retention and promotion.

One example of a positive development route is becoming a Cumberland Change Champion. A great opportunity to collaborate with a wide range of colleagues and look at innovative ways to develop even better, innovative services to meet the needs of our residents.

### **Section four - Supporting Service/Team Priorities**

#### **A) Progress on Personal Work Priorities**

This section covers a review of previously agreed work priorities, progress towards and actual achievement.

- What has gone well? What is helping/has helped this?
- What have you learned from this?
- What is impacting on achievement? What have you done/are you doing to reduce this impact?
- What support do you need?

#### **B) Your Contribution - New Service/Team Specific Priorities**

This section provides the opportunity at the annual summary to discuss and agree new priorities for the next 12 month to support the achievement of personal and team/service priorities.

In considering priorities for employees, managers should consider what are the strengths of that individual and what tasks would really play to those strengths and enable them to grow and thrive. What are the areas that would interest and motivate them and add even more value to the team and organisation?

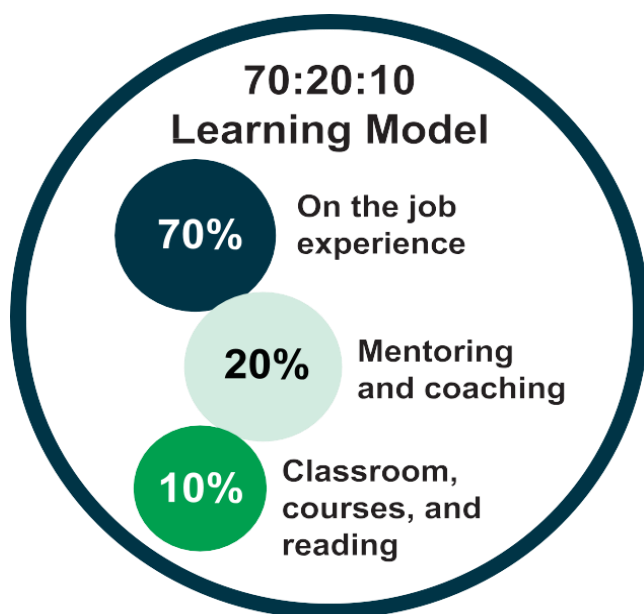
Once agreed, please ensure they are captured on the Appraisal Priorities template.

### **C) Support and development**

In agreeing and setting priorities, it is important to consider the support and development needs to support achievement. This section is to note any development needs which fall outwith the mandatory/required training for their role (which is captured separately through your service line management into a training plan), but would include additional development such as work shadowing, coaching, mentoring, learning journeys and would typically be self driven and/or facilitated and supported by you, the line manager or others within the team/service or may involve collaborating with other teams and services across the council and/or with other key stakeholders.

The council is committed to encouraging the 70:20:10 model of learning, based on the principles that:

- **70%** of learning comes from experience on the job, experiment and reflective practice.
- **20%** comes from working with others, coaching and mentoring.
- **10%** comes from formal learning interventions such as courses.



Consider how can you use this model in your development of individuals and teams.

Where an additional course or learning requirement is identified, this should be submitted by the line manager. It is important not to over promise and is subject to budgetary constraints and priorities. Follow this link to explore what's on My Learning. [iLearn - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)

### **And finally... Overall Summary Comments and Sign off**

The last section of the template provides space for the employee and the line manager to add some summary comments. This is space to make an overall comment about the employee's contribution. If you've not covered it in other areas, you may want to include where you have had

feedback from others, whether it be their colleagues, other teams or managers they have been working with.

Once all this is completed the form should be signed by both parties and dated. Line Managers must ensure the annual summary is recorded on the Cumberland Employee Appraisal Completion Form, together with any additional personal development needs.

Please note this form captures both the date of completion and any additional learning needs identified and will be collated by LD Admin. These identified needs will then be reviewed by the service/directorate in conjunction with Learning and Development.

## Cumberland Employee Appraisal Priorities Template

This template should be used to note the discussed and agreed personal and service/team priorities.

As detailed above, in considering priorities for employees, managers should consider what are the **strengths** of that individual and what tasks would really play to those strengths and enable them to grow and thrive. What are the areas that would interest and motivate them and add even more value to the team and organisation? Involve them in the conversation and writing of the priorities, including suggestions as to how they could be successfully delivered.

In agreeing priorities, please ensure that:

- They are as clear as possible - what will delivery/success look like?
- It will be clear when achieved/progress made - you can see it.
- It can be achieved by the person and team - it is possible, within their reach, capabilities, sphere of influence.
- It can and needs to be done - whilst stretch and ambition is to be encouraged and supported it needs to be achievable.
- It needs to be achieved in the agreed timeframe to meet a priority need - it is a priority and not a “nice to have one day task”.

Consider and discuss how the priorities can be delivered and what barriers/obstacles may be faced and how they might be overcome. This leads to what support needs may be identified and, again, encourage the employee to lead on this, thinking through what they may need to do, learn, research to ensure progress and success.

The final column provides space to record progress and achievement which compliments the conversation template.

The template also provides space to capture more detail and progress with career aspirations and areas of interest.

Once agreed, this template supports your regular one to one conversations and the annual summary.

If you have any queries about the appraisal process or need support, please contact [learninganddevelopment@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:learninganddevelopment@cumberland.gov.uk)