PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCEDURE

Introduction:
To assist to ensure Council is well placed in its corporate area, to achieve its Objectives and Strategic Goal “to provide leadership and ensure community resources are managed efficiently and effectively”, a Performance Evaluation and Review Program is a strategy which should be conducted annually.

The Performance Evaluation and Review Program should provide Managers and Supervisors with the opportunity to review the currency of job and person specifications, discuss employee performance against pre-determined performance indicators, establish new goals and develop training plans for the following twelve (12) month review period.

The benefits of a performance evaluation and review:
There are many benefits of an effective Performance Evaluation and Review Program for both Managers/Supervisors and employees, such as:

• providing opportunities to improve communication through the giving and receiving of feedback on performance
• having the opportunity to exchange views
• Managers/Supervisors having a better understanding of the strengths and challenges of their employees, while employees have a better appreciation of their skills and training needs
• contributing to planning process for the position and the department
• clarifying the role and reviewing the job description
• employees participate in identifying their training needs to enhance their performance and having an active involvement in their career development
• Managers/Supervisors may identify appropriate jobs which match employee skills
• identifying and addressing barriers or obstacles to achieving good performance

The Performance Evaluation and Review Program also provide benefits for the Council, such as:

• establishing performance indicators so employees are able to measure their own success
• providing a process for constructive discussions about Council and department goals between employees and Managers/Supervisors
• improving productivity by raising levels of employees commitment and motivation
• identifying resource issues or other performance barriers
• establishing a formal Council wide training plan to assist with annual budget forecasting
• reducing the potential for employee grievances through an effective two-way feedback process of Performance Evaluation and Review Program
PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCEDURE

Timing of the program
Each annual program should commence several weeks prior to establishing the following financial year’s budgets. This timeframe will enable training needs to be identified and training plans developed with anticipated expenditure transferred into Council’s training budget.

Procedure:
The key elements to the effective appraisal process are:-

- preparing for the review meeting
- having a job and person specification (JPS) in place which reflects the duties to be performed and appropriate performance indicators
- conducting the review meeting, ensuring there is a two-way discussion
- planning goals and establishing action plans for the forthcoming year incorporating training opportunities
- following up on both action plan and training plan commitments

Preparation

Managers/Supervisors usually arrange a mutually acceptable interview location, date and time. They will give the Performance Evaluation and Review Program workbook to their employee to complete, which will often involve self-assessment by the employee.

If performance appraisals have been conducted in the past, any reports should be reviewed for the status of any issues or training plans considered at that review. This is also as good time to review job and person specifications.

Managers/Supervisors would also be expected to review the Strategic Plan to determine how each person’s individual performance can link into the goals, strategies and plans of the Council so that they can contribute to the achievement of the contents of these plans.

Conducting the interview

The place for the interview should facilitate a confidential, uninterrupted discussion. Both parties should ensure that plenty of time is allocated. If required the Human Resource Officer is available to assist with this process.

There are three forms Performance Evaluation and Review Program (CEO and Managers) – Form 5, Performance Evaluation and Review Program (Administrative Employees) – Form 6 and Performance Evaluation and Review Program (Field Employees) – Form 7 and each form comprises 6 sections, which should be completed in the following way:
Section 1: Using the workbook, review the performance of the employee against the Performance Criteria of the Job and Person Specification (JPS). Discuss the required tasks and each of the performance indicators shown in the JPS, rating them in degrees of performance from 1 to 4. Appropriate comments to 'qualify' the rating should be provided.

Section 2: Identify special achievements, resource needs, barriers or obstacles which may have an effect on hindering performance or achievements and, in particular, identify opportunities for improvements in existing work processes or systems. This section provides a valuable opportunity to discuss ideas or gain information from employees about new initiatives, systems or work practices.

Section 3: Refer to the Person Specification / Specialist Skills and Knowledge section of the JPS. Discuss the levels of skills, knowledge and experience required of, or utilised in, the position and identify any skills or experience gaps. Using the suggested performance indicators as a 'prompt' for discussion, rate the levels achieved from 1 to 4. Appropriate notations to 'qualify' the rating should be provided.

Section 4: Identify appropriate employee development strategies which can be transferred into Council's training program. These may include training courses, seminars, and conferences, on-the-job training, contribution towards special projects, job sharing or job rotation.

Section 5: Identify new performance goals for the next twelve (12) months and develop action plans with timelines. These should be initiated at the time of the interview and confirmed within 2 or 3 weeks following the interview. It is important that action plans are specific, measurable, and realistic and fit within the parameters of the job description.

Section 6: Prepare a final statement reviewing/summarising the comments, issues and actions made by the Manager, Supervisor, and employee during the appraisal. The form is to be returned to the employee for signature.

ENSURING FAIRNESS AND EQUITY

Responsibilities of the Manager/Supervisor

Managers and Supervisors should be mindful that the performance appraisal process may be a sensitive issue for some employees, regardless of their performance outputs.

Managers and Supervisors should strive to be accurate, descriptive, supportive and constructive in their feedback. They should consider the following issues to ensure that they conduct the appraisals competently, fairly and equitably.
These include:

- ensuring gender, race, religion, education, family background or age play no part in the process
- considering the performance and results for the entire review period, and not being prejudiced by recent events of either positive or negative influences
- relying on facts and evidence, rather than perceptions
- not holding an individual accountable for any factors that are beyond their control or are outside the scope of their JPS
- ensuring the discussion achieves both the giving and receiving of feedback

Responsibilities of the Employee

Employees undergoing the review process should be prepared to receive feedback on performance. Equally, they should be prepared to offer views and feedback to their Manager/Supervisor. Effective two-way feedback will assist in establishing an effective working relationship between the Manager/Supervisor and employee. They should contribute fully to the discussion and seek to clarify issues that are not clearly understood. Finally, they should follow up on agreed training commitments and new goals for the year, if they appear to have been forgotten or deferred.

Finalising the process

When the Manager/Supervisor and employee reach agreement on the outcomes of the interview, they should sign and refer the report to the relevant Manager for notation and signing. The original report (Sections 1, 2, 3 and 6) should than be filed in the employee’s confidential personal file, and kept in a secure area. A copy should always be provided to the employee. Section 4 - Training Plans should be transferred to Council’s training file for the development of training plans. Section 5 - Agreed Goals and Action Plans, should be provided to the individual for implementation (a copy also placed in employee personal file).

Implementing action plans

Following the Performance Appraisal interview, Managers/Supervisors should monitor the action plans for the following twelve (12) months. They should discuss the plans with their employees to ensure that special projects or tasks are commenced and running to predetermined timelines. Monthly team meetings to discuss progress of action plans will maintain a focus on action plan implementation, and provide the opportunity for Managers/Supervisors to offer guidance or support, as required.
Privacy and confidentiality

The Performance Appraisal forms are private and confidential documents and must be treated as such by personnel who have access rights. Access rights are often restricted to the Chief Executive Officer, relevant Manager/Supervisor, Human Resource Officer and employee. The training plan co-ordinator may receive Section 4 (Training Plans) so that the organisational training plan can be developed.

Training

Training in the principles of performance development review and career planning, as well as the practical application of the Performance Appraisal process needs to occur with all employees prior to the introduction of a Performance Evaluation and Review Program process. There may also be a need for some communication or interviewing techniques training for Managers and Supervisors, who will be required to undertake the Performance Evaluation and Review Program.

Grievance resolution

If an employee has a grievance regarding the process undertaken during their Performance Appraisal interview and/or outcome they should have access to a dispute resolution procedure. In the first instance, call for discussions of the nature of the grievance to be held with the employee’s relevant Manager. The Manager will usually endeavour to resolve the matter, however where matters remain unresolved or inadequately addressed they can referred to the Human Resource Officer.

Formal performance improvement process

There may be occasions where performance outputs are significantly lower than expected of an employee, which will require the Manager/Supervisor to intervene with a more formal performance improvement process. The process should provide the Manager/Supervisor and employee with a structured process for improving performance within an appropriate framework of coaching, encouragement, formal training opportunities and defined parameters of performance and timeframes.

Scope

This procedure is for the use by all Management and staff employed by the District Council of the Copper Coast.
PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCEDURE

CONTACT POSITION

For more information on this procedure contact the Human Resource Officer.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

• Performance Evaluation and Review Program (CEO and Managers) – Form 5
• Performance Evaluation and Review Program (Administrative Employees) – Form 6
• Performance Evaluation and Review Program (Field Employees) – Form 7
• District Council of the Copper Coast relevant Agreements

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Peter Dinning           Date
Chief Executive Officer

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Jodi Russack                 Date
Human Resource Officer