

Value: Working as a team for Leeds

Priority: Staff have a clear understanding of their role as well as clear objectives and performance targets which are monitored through high quality appraisals.

Why is this priority? Appraisals for all staff are essential in driving effective performance management to achieve the Council's business and service plan objectives, embed the revised values and help us meet future challenges. The Chief Executive and directors are championing regular appraisals as a priority so that all employees are managed, motivated and developed to perform their role effectively and deliver improving services for Leeds.

Overall Progress
AMBER

Story behind the baseline

Appraisal targets – For 2011-12, an annual appraisal timetable was agreed with full appraisals taking place between April and July 2011 and interim meetings between October and December. One of the Chief Executive's three 'Calls to Action' in 2011/12 to all leaders is to ensure that all employees have a quality appraisal with a Personal Development Plan and at least one development action linked to service plans.

As at 31 March 2012, 92% of staff were recorded as having had a full appraisal, with the Environments and Neighbourhoods and Children's Services directorates reporting the lowest figures of 85% and 86%. All other directorates completed between 90% and 100%.

As at 31 March 2012, 80% of staff were recorded as having received a 6 month review. One-off exemptions were previously agreed for the majority of Commercial Services and Sports due to service constraints and restructuring. There will be no exemptions following the introduction of performance and learning management system (PAL) in 2012/13.

The figure of 70% for Environment and Neighbourhoods is due to service constraints affecting crew-based staff within Waste Management Services and an approach to address this in 2012/12 is being prepared. For ASC, 89% of 6 month reviews were recorded in SAP, at the time of writing there are still some completed reviews to record in SAP. Children's Services mid year review figure of 56% is due in large part to the impact of the directorate wide restructuring activity involving over 3000 staff which has been implemented in stages since 1st November 2011.

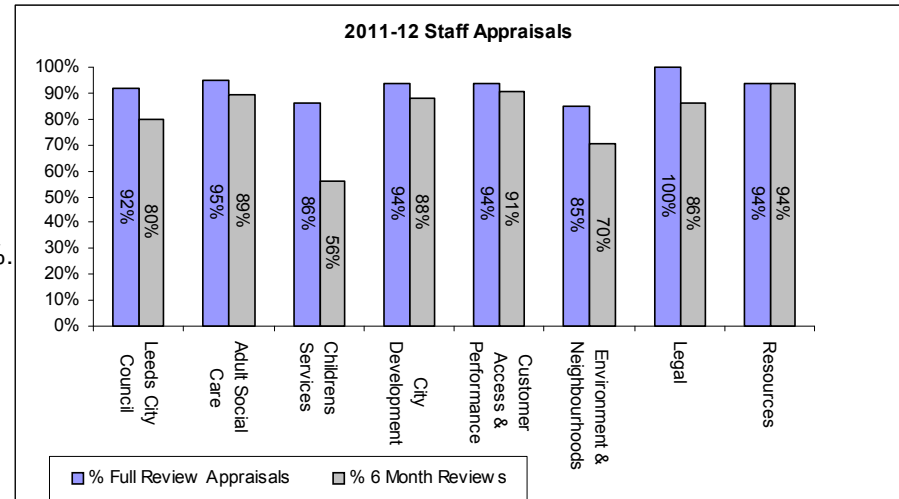
All staff absent due to maternity, sickness leave or a career break for 6 months or more on the date reports are run are excluded from any calculations and reports including total headcount. The overall variance in the final year-end 6 month review figures is likely to be due to some under reporting, restructures, staff movements and corrections to duplicate records loaded onto SAP by co-ordinators.

Looking forward, an improved performance and learning management system (PAL) will be introduced in May 2012. The next round of full year appraisals will take place between May and July 2012. Responsibility for reporting appraisal completion moves from the BSC to the HR team as of May 2012. Monthly reports will be produced in May, June and July 2012 to track progress towards the target of 100% appraisals undertaken by 31st July 2012.

What do staff think

The 2011 Employee Engagement Survey provided baseline data about how people feel about the support, guidance and feedback from their managers and quarterly sample surveys will provide ongoing intelligence. The survey results said that 'being clear about what they need to achieve in their job' was important to staff and feedback shows that, although managers communicate this well, some managers could provide more regular feedback on how they are doing their job. To accurately assess the degree to which staff feel this is happening in appraisals, additional questions have been added to the 2012 Quarter 1 Survey. These are explained under 'New Actions' below.

Headline Indicator: Every year 100 per cent of staff have an appraisal



The Investors in People report stated that, whilst our performance on appraisals and development plans had improved and the majority of people and teams are being managed well with regular appraisals, this was not consistent across the authority. The assessor stated that leaders and managers need to perform their people management role in line with behaviours as described in 'Living Our Values' - which includes providing staff with regular feedback, development and support through regular appraisals and interim reviews.

What we did:

- CLT, on 29th November 2011, agreed:
 - the consistent use of performance assessment in appraisals for all staff.
 - annual revenue contributions from corporate and directorate based workforce development budgets to implement the on-line performance management and learning system, until efficiencies are realised and savings redirected back
- A briefing note taken to CLT regarding the 2011-12 Mid-Year review position and, looking forward, the arrangements for Appraisals in 2012/13.
- Mid year reviews: A full list of non-completions around mid year reviews was shared with Directors. Following checks, Directors were asked to share this data directly to Heads of Service, to seek substantial reasons and explanations for why mid year reviews for all staff have not taken place. All final records to be submitted by 27th April 2012.
- Appraisals 2012/13: A full review of appraisal arrangements has been completed and, looking forwards, a new simpler, single appraisal approach has been agreed. This addresses the complexity of current appraisal documentation, inconsistencies in the implementation of quality appraisals and recording issues across the organisation.

New Actions:

The main principles of the new approach are that:

- the appraisal approach and forms are simplified and shorter
- there is consistency in approach across the organisation
- the focus of a quality appraisal centres on a quality discussion, with preparation from manager and employee
- objective setting, performance assessment and development planning are included and conducted well in all appraisals.
- leaders and managers behaviours reinforced by 'Living our Values' behaviours

The reporting process is being improved for 2012/13: The move to the new on-line Performance and Learning System (PAL) will help us record appraisal information accurately for those in scope, and a new process for recording paper-based appraisals will be introduced for those employees not in scope.

Appraisal guidance will be communicated across the organisation, and a renewed approach to appraisal skills training will be launched.

Appraisal Champions have been identified across the organisation and trained to support managers in the implementation of the on-line system.

Three additional questions have been added to the 2012 Quarter 1 Survey to assess if people are having quality appraisals with discussions about performance and development planning and whether managers regularly create opportunities to discuss issues that affect people and their team.

Data Development:

The final Quarter 4 mid-year review figure may be due to under-reporting and work has taken place during April to rectify this to provide an accurate 2011/12 year end position.

PAL will provide a suite of reports on appraisals performance e.g. the numbers, appraised and all appraisal data will be recorded and can be accessed directly by managers.

What Worked Locally /Case study of impact:

- In Commercial Services, managers of large front line services successfully amended their existing appraisal booklets to fit with the approach to be introduced in 2012/13.
- In ASC HR/OD Business Partners Communication Plan in place to promote the new system and is being rolled out to management teams across the directorate. Appraisal Champions have been identified and are currently being trained.

Risks and Challenges

- Resourcing issues for one-to-one appraisals for some crew-based, short-hour staff and those working remotely from supervisors in front line services.
- Ensuring that all staff appraisals are recorded under the new PAL system, particularly those that do not have direct on-line access.