

Toft Newton Parish Council

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Employee Probationary and Appraisal Policy Statement v002

Toft Newton Parish Council recognises that all staff and volunteers should be treated fairly, therefore, this procedure aims to provide consistency in the treatment of all paid and unpaid staff.

This procedure is a framework for the clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of our staff, and for supporting and developing staff to enable them to deliver the best possible service to the residents of our parish.

The purpose of the appraisal meeting is therefore to clarify objectives, identify changes in the nature of the work done and possible new directions, help staff to make the most of themselves by reviewing their strengths and weaknesses with a view to planning action to assist development, and at the same time increase the effectiveness of Toft Newton Parish Council. This might include changes in work practices, identification of training needs, and the consideration of long-term plans.

Staff appraisals reinforce our equality and diversity policies, and staff responsibilities.

Toft Newton Parish Council recognises that our staff:

- Know what is expected of them.
- Have the right skills, knowledge and ability to be able to do their work.
- Feel supported in their role.
- Are given constructive feedback.
- Are able to share and discuss ideas about making Toft Newton Parish Council more successful.
- Effectiveness across the services that Toft Newton Parish Council provide will be improved, along with staff motivation.

The appraisal procedure must not be confused with other procedures, in particular:

- For dealing with disciplinary or grievance matters. There are separate and agreed procedures to deal with these. If a disciplinary matter is outstanding, it must be dealt with first and separately before the annual appraisal interview takes place.
- For dealing with matters concerning salaries and general terms and conditions of employment. It may be that evidence from an appraisal will be relevant to a particular grading claim for example, but there are separate procedures for dealing with these matters.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all staff who are employed by Toft Newton Parish Council, including part-time and temporary workers, regardless of hours worked or length of service.

This probationary and appraisal procedure applies to all members of staff.

All new members of staff will be made aware of this procedure, and how it operates as part of their induction.

The probationary period as set out in the employees' contract of employment will stipulate how long the probationary period is. During the probationary period, staff members will have a mid-point review and a further review at the end of the probationary period.

In accordance with the 1986 Hillingdon Authority and the Terms of Reference of our own Personnel Committee, as agreed on the 7th of July 2026, all probationary and appraisal reviews will be facilitated by two members of the Personnel Committee.

General Principles

- **Fairness** – This procedure aims to treat all staff fairly, consistently, impartially, promptly and reasonably.
- **Equality and diversity** – This procedure will be applied without discrimination.

If someone has an existing mental or physical health condition which they have previously disclosed, Toft Newton Parish Council will make reasonable adjustments to the process as necessary. Therefore, it is important that disabled workers inform Toft Newton Parish Council of any apparent or non-apparent mental or physical health condition.

- **Confidentiality** – All documentation and records relating to this procedure including notes of meetings will be treated as confidential, stored securely and only accessed by those individuals involved in the procedure. They will be kept no longer than necessary in accordance with Toft Newton Parish Council's Record Retention Policy and Data Protection Policies. Any breach of confidence may be treated as a disciplinary case of misconduct.
- **Constructive feedback** – This procedure should be used to emphasis what has been done well, offering constructive feedback to individuals on their performance and progress, and on what is required for them to improve and perform well in the future.
- **Open exchange of views** – The appraisal meeting should provide an opportunity for an open dialogue about the past year's progress and areas for improvement, as well as an opportunity to request support needed from Toft Newton Parish Council to improve performance. The underlying attitudes of the meeting should be those of respect, empathy and honesty.
- **Agreement** – The appraisal review, objective setting and report are all to be jointly agreed between the appraiser and appraisee.

Responsibilities of managers

The Proper Officer should ensure that all staff are aware of this procedure and understand their own and Toft Newton Parish Council's responsibilities.

As well as a performance appraisal, line managers should ensure that lines of communication are always open, and that staff have regular one-to-ones.

The Proper Officer, the Chair of the parish council and the Chair of the personnel committee are responsible for the prompt implementation of reasonable adjustments for disabled workers to remove or reduce barriers to achievement.

The Proper Officer will be trained in performance management to help ensure that the procedure operates fairly and consistently and in line with all its general principles.

Responsibilities of employees and volunteers

All staff should familiarise themselves with this policy and the performance management procedures, and ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities.

Trade union involvement

While Toft Newton Parish Council does not have any Trade Union support or affiliation, staff are free to join a relevant Trade Union or relevant professional organisation and seek their support for work related issues.

We commit to working with any Trade Union representing our staff, and we chose the Unison model appraisal policy, to base our policy on.

Review and monitoring

Toft Newton Parish Council will ensure that all new paid and unpaid workers, supervisors and managers will receive induction on the procedure.

Adequate resources will be made available to fulfil the aims of this procedure, including meeting training and development needs as appropriate.

This procedure and appraisal form will be reviewed on an annual basis. The review will include the consideration of:

- The operation of the appraisal procedure.
- The effectiveness of the appraisal procedure.
- Staff training and development needs.
- Any proposed changes to the appraisal procedure, based on it's implementation, use, and review, changes to legislation or updates in perceived good practice as suggested by HR specialists, SLCC or NALC.

The Procedure

The performance of all staff must be reviewed at least on an annual basis.

Staff members will be reviewed by their line-manager/supervisor.

The appraisal meeting should be planned in advance and the line-manager will give at least 10 days' notice of an appraisal meeting to enable the member of staff sufficient time to prepare.

The meeting should take place in a confidential and quiet location which is free from interruptions or disturbance.

At least one hour should be set aside for the meeting. All appraisals will take place within the worker's working hours. If this cannot be achieved, overtime will be agreed.

Preparation

The line manager (the appraiser) should prepare by reviewing the worker's:

- Job description / person specification.
- Any objectives and performance standards that were set at last year's appraisal.
- A copy of the previous appraisal document.

- A record of any training over the last 12 months.

The employee should complete a self-appraisal form before the meeting and pass a copy to their line manager ideally three days before the meeting date so that the points they contain can be considered.

Similarly, line managers should complete a pre-appraisal form the meeting and pass a copy to the worker ideally three days before the meeting date so that the points they contain can be considered.

This exchange of forms must take place at the same time.

Line managers should also prepare by looking over supervision records, notes from the last appraisal and the job description, as well as considering what they would like the worker to achieve in the next year.

The worker should also prepare by looking over supervision records, notes from the last appraisal and the job description.

Our appraisal form is attached to the end of this policy.

The appraisal meeting

The volunteers / workers objectives should be the main focus for the appraisal meeting, as well as the worker's overall performance over the past year.

The objectives set for individual workers will be rigorous, challenging, achievable, time-bound, fair and equitable in relation to staff with similar role / responsibilities and experience in other small parish councils.

It is recognised that the objectives may not cover the full range of an employee's role or responsibilities but should focus on the priorities for the employee for the agreed period.

Staff will not necessarily all have the same number of objectives but usually there will be no more than three objectives.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 Toft Newton Parish Council will not discriminate against disabled workers in the consideration of objective setting but will consider and accommodate all reasonable adjustment needs within a reasonable timeframe.

Toft Newton Parish Council will not discriminate against pregnant workers or those on maternity, adoption, paternity (maternity support) and shared parental leave in the consideration of objective setting.

Each appraisal will follow this agenda:

1. Line manager explains the course of the meeting.
2. Discussion of progress made towards achievement of agreed objectives and performance standards including:
 - Highlighting items of work success
 - Areas of the job that the staff member enjoys.
 - Areas where the employee is less confident or able.
3. Were there any problems or barriers to achievement?

4. How might these be overcome (including consideration of reasonable adjustments if applicable)?
5. Are there any changes to duties or responsibilities since the last appraisal?
 - Does the job description need to be updated?
6. Agree objectives and goals for the next year:
 - Are there any potential problems or barriers to achievement?
 - How might these be overcome, (including consideration of reasonable adjustments if applicable)?
7. Review of the staff member's learning and development plan.
8. Discussion of any other issues that the staff member wants to raise.
9. Line manager summarises their view of the staff member's overall performance, the points covered and the agreed action.

Appraisal report

As soon as possible following the appraisal the line-manager should produce a written appraisal report, which will have been drawn up during the discussion between reviewer and reviewee. The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the objectives which were agreed for the year ahead.
- An assessment of the worker's performance against their last objectives.
- An assessment of a worker's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to meet them.

The staff member should be asked to confirm the accuracy of the report and add any additional comments.

The report should be signed and dated by both parties no later than 10 days after the appraisal meeting.

If the appraisee wishes to query anything recorded on the report, they have the right to request a second meeting to discuss it with the appraiser, and seek to resolve any concerns.

If there is a second meeting, a new report should be written after the second meeting and again should reflect the discussions of both participants and be agreed as above.

In the event of failure to agree or dissatisfaction with the appraisal meeting, the usual grievance procedures should be followed.

Appraisal records will be treated as confidential and kept no longer than necessary in line with Toft Newton Parish Council's Data Protection policies and in accordance with the data protection principles set out in data protection legislation.

The line-manager and worker can review how the goals and objectives are followed up at the regular supervision meeting, including following up on learning and development needs.

Reviews

Toft Newton Parish Council will review this policy as per the schedule below, or sooner if changes to local or national guidance or legislation require a revision to take place sooner.

Previous versions of this policy will be retained on the Zoho WorkDrive and will have a version number appended to their file name.

First approved by Toft Newton Parish Council on:	5 th May 2026
This review was approved by Toft Newton Parish Council on:	8 th September 2026
Next review:	September 2029
Then review:	Every three years
