

## Check-in scheme procedure

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## Document history

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V1.0	March 2019	New procedure to support the new performance management process which replaces the old PPA Scheme	Theresa Brown

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## 1. Our policy

- 1.1 We want our employees to perform their work at Luton Council to the highest possible standard they're able to achieve personally, in a positive working environment.

Therefore, we believe that line managers having regular, good quality performance conversations (check-ins) to review employees' progress and performance at work is at the heart of our approach. This will include:

- supporting and driving performance
- celebrating successes
- identifying areas that need improving
- discussing your general wellbeing

- 1.2 This procedure needs to be read in conjunction with other council policies and procedures particularly the employee performance procedure. Guidance for implementing this procedure is available for staff as part of the check-in toolkit.

- 1.3 This procedure replaces all previous appraisal schemes.

## 2. Purpose of this procedure

2.1 The purpose of this procedure is to clarify:

- our commitment to regular check-ins for every employee
- purpose, objectives and outcomes of the check in procedure
- minimum expectations of the frequency that employees are met with
- minimum standards expected when meeting with employees
- support available to employees under this process

2.2 The objectives of the procedure are to:

- clarify and review standards, direction and determine if the employee is performing to a satisfactory level
- celebrate successes and individual strengths
- identify barriers, development needs and find solutions
- provide clear and objective feedback to individuals
- help everyone to be the best they can be and to take responsibility for their own performance solutions

2.3 The expected outcomes are:

- clear workload and standards of performance for the weeks/months and where appropriate the year ahead, including objectives where appropriate, agreed by the employee and manager
- clear understanding of the employee's wellbeing
- personal development plan to meet learning and development needs agreed by employee and manager where possible and practicable
- written record of the key points of the discussions for the employee to sign alongside the manager
- employees feel wherever possible, valued, motivated and supported

## 3. Scope

3.1 This procedure applies to all employees other than school based staff operating under the [scheme of financial delegation](#), for whom separate procedures exist, and employees during their probationary period for whom the probationary procedure will apply.

## 4. The key principles

4.1 Every employee has a right to:

- a minimum of one check-in meeting every quarter to the standards listed in this procedure
- request an individual check-in meeting
- written record of the meeting, which they will sign to confirm that it is a true reflection of the conversation
- not sign the written record of the discussion if it is not a true reflection of what was discussed and agreed

- alternative arrangements for their check-ins if they have made a formal complaint of harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation by their own manager and the investigation is not complete
- choose whether or not they wish to discuss any personal matters with their manager when considering their wellbeing

#### 4.2 Managers have a responsibility to:

- hold check-in meetings at regular intervals (at least quarterly) with employees to the standards in this procedure
- achieve the purpose, objectives and outcomes in this procedure
- using the coaching methodology as detailed in the online tools and resources
- give a valid reason if an individual check-in is refused
- include all relevant people in considering and discussing an individual's performance
- record the details on iTRENT as soon as the check-in has taken
- utilise a standard check-in template and a toolkit of resources to support managers who undertake the meetings

4.4 Team check-ins may take place where it is considered either by a manager or by a team of individuals that a team discussion would be more constructive. Team check-ins are most appropriately used where a team of individuals all carry out the same duties and share the same objectives in the same area.

4.4.1 Team check-ins may only be carried out where all members of the team and their manager/supervisor agree to it; this must then be agreed by the relevant service director. Every individual will have the right to have an individual check-in if they prefer.

4.4.2. In circumstances where it is necessary for a manager/supervisor to discuss the poor performance of an individual within a team which is receiving team check-ins, this should be done using the employee performance procedure on a one to one basis.

4.5 Check-ins must be completed as a minimum on a quarterly basis. However managers and employees are able to agree a more regular pattern if this is preferred.

4.6 If it is recognised that an employee is not performing, additional meetings should be held in line with any improvement plan that is agreed.

## 5. The check-in process

5.1 The coaching techniques used in check-ins are a powerful way of transforming conversations between employees and managers. The conversation is structured within a framework using a coaching model that encourages employees to:

- be focused and self-challenging in relation to their work, performance and any personal circumstances
- identify solutions

The conversations involve the manager actively listening, identifying the headlines and/or common themes, any barriers whilst constructively supporting the employee to think about what actions need to be taken within achievable and realistic stages and timescales.

- 5.2 As part of the check-in process all employees should be advised and helped to recognise whether or not they are performing at the expected level – this will ensure that all employees know where they may focus any continuous improvement.
- 5.3 A performance improvement plan will be used when individuals are not performing.
- 5.4 If an employee's performance does not improve to an acceptable standard within the three month timeframe recommended under the performance improvement plan, managers may commence the 'first review' stage as set out at section 5.2 of our employee performance procedure.

## 6. Review

- 6.1 If an employee is not satisfied with an outcome of not performing they should write to the manager of the manager that held the meeting **within ten working days**. The employee should state that they are requesting a review providing in full their reasons for making such a request. The resulting decision of the manager conducting the review is final.

## 7. Other points

- 7.1 An employee is entitled to ask for assistance or support during a check-in meeting, if they require this due to a recent breakdown in their relationship with their line manager or due to the application of other council policies such as disciplinary, problem resolution. Each request for support will be treated on its merits and agreed where appropriate.
- 7.2 Reasonable adjustments should be made to the check-in process and meetings to help meet individual employee's needs, particularly those with a disability who have a legal right for reasonable adjustments to be considered.
- 7.3 Employees absent on sickness absence, maternity leave or a career break will not be requested to return to work to attend check-ins. However, a meeting should be offered as soon as possible after the employee returns to work.
- 7.4 The purpose of holding regular check-ins is to develop employees in a positive and constructive manner. It is recognised that employees may also be subject to other procedures such as disciplinary procedure, sickness absence procedure or employee performance procedure; however this should not prevent check-ins from being held.
- 7.5 Detailed guidance for employees and managers can be found on the intranet.

[See check-in scheme guidance here.](#)