**Performance Improvement Procedure – Line Manager Guide**

**Overview**

You must recognise the importance of individual performance and endeavour to ensure that all employees achieve and maintain a high standard of performance. You must ensure that fair and achievable standard is established and communicated, performance is monitored, and employees are given appropriate training and support to meet these standards.

However, it is recognised that there are occasions when the individual's performance may need to meet the expected standards. In these circumstances, the primary aim is to support the employee to improve their performance. This will be done by providing appropriate resources, e.g. training, coaching etc., to assist employees in developing into their roles.

Where poor performance results from carelessness, negligence, or a deliberate unwillingness by the employee to cooperate in any training or development, the Resolution/Disciplinary policy and procedure will normally be the appropriate way of dealing with the issue.

The Performance Improvement Policy has been designed to ensure managers fully and properly consider the most appropriate way of handling individual performance issues. This is a supportive policy to enable employees to achieve the required standard of performance expected in the organisation.

For various reasons, colleagues who are conscientious, hardworking, willing to Improve and who have undertaken appropriate training may need help to fulfil the requirements of their role. This situation can arise, for example, when an individual has been recruited into a job for which they were unsuitable, or it can occur when the nature of the role, technology or the complexity of the job evolves over a period of time. This can result in a mismatch between the job and the individual jobholder’s capability to perform it.

To ensure that performance improvement is managed fairly across the business, the Performance Improvement Procedure has been developed.

**ACTIONS FOR MANAGERS**

**Informal Performance Improvement**

When areas of poor performance are highlighted, managers should address these informally in the first instance. Managers should ensure that colleagues are given specific examples to demonstrate when performance has fallen below accepted/agreed standards, what the colleague needs to do to improve the position and what support the line manager will give.

Agree on what training/coaching/other measures will be provided to help the employee achieve the required level of performance. Reasonable targets and timescales for improvement should be made clear and documented in an action plan.

Ensure the employee receives regular feedback on the progress of the action plan/interventions.

If, following the informal stage, there are still performance issues, managers should consider moving to the formal stage of the process.

**Formal Stages of the Performance Improvement Process – formal meetings**

The manager should invite the employee in writing to a meeting under the stages of the Performance Improvement Policy. The letter should set out the performance problems that led the manager to contemplate taking formal action and explain the basis for this concern, providing examples of unsatisfactory performance.

If the meeting takes place under stage 4, the employee must be advised that one of the possible outcomes could be termination of employment.

At the meeting, discuss the performance shortfalls and whether agreed support measures have assisted the employee; if not, discuss why not. If an agreed support measure has not taken place, it may be appropriate to adjourn the meeting, and this should be followed up.

Standards/targets should be reviewed, and performance discussed against these. In particular, it is important to distinguish areas where; improvements have been made, performance is at or above expectations, performance has deteriorated, and progress has yet to be made. This should be documented in the action plan.

When further improvement is necessary, the line manager should clarify what is required and discuss available training/retraining options and other possible support or development measures.

The manager should explore whether there are any circumstances which may be affecting the employee's performance.

These may include whether the colleague considers they are properly matched to their role or if any circumstances, e.g. health, personal, or financial, may affect their performance.

Discuss and agree on an action plan designed to achieve a significant and sustained improvement in performance.

Agree on timescales and explain that failure to achieve the desired improvement will trigger the next stage in the procedure.

At all stages of the process, a formal record of the meeting, summarising the discussion and a copy of the agreed action plan should be provided to the employee.

The employee should be notified in writing of their right of appeal at each formal stage.