



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Statutory Officers Annual Appraisal Process

Introduction

1. Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority is committed to the on-going development of all its staff. Formal appraisal processes form an important part of this approach.
2. The Service's existing procedures for Individual Performance and Development Review (IPDR) will apply to the posts of:

Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Treasurer
Monitoring Officer

subject to necessary amendments and adjustments as described in this document. This document also sets out how elected members will be involved in the performance appraisal of those posts.

PART 1 – Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive

3. The national terms and conditions of service applicable to Chief Fire Officers ('the Gold book') provide that their performance should be formally assessed through a performance appraisal process

Objectives

4. The focus of the IPDR process will be on clarifying what the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive is expected to achieve and on identifying any continuing personal development needs which, if met, would maintain a high level of performance. The process of setting objectives should be by agreement and the result should be to identify objectives which are relevant and challenging but achievable.
5. The process should not become complex. At all times it needs to focus clearly on a few basic issues:
 - What the role of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive is;
 - what has been done well;
 - what could have been done better;
 - the major issues over the next year; and
 - what development needs the process identifies.

Responsibility for Appraisal

6. The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive's IPDR appraisal will be conducted by:
Chairman of the Authority; together with
Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee and
Chairman of Audit & Standards Committee.

The Purpose of the Appraisal

7. To identify and clarify the key objectives, priorities and targets of the Service with specific reference to the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive's area of responsibility, over the next (twelve) months.
8. Agree what the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive should personally achieve over the next (twelve) months and identify standards of performance, in order to deliver the Service's key objectives, priorities and targets. These targets should be realistic and achievable in the light of available resources and time. Standards of performance should be expressed in ways that can be monitored objectively. The parties should identify the resource implications of the agreed objectives.
9. Discuss positive achievements over the past (twelve) months and identify reasons for good performance.
10. Discuss instances over the past (twelve) months where targets have not been met, jointly identifying factors preventing the achievement of agreed goals.
11. Discuss development requirements. The parties should identify and where necessary provide the professional development necessary to equip him or her with the requisite skills to meet the Service's objectives. The parties should be proactive and anticipate future development needs in the context of the Service's changing priorities. This discussion may lead to agreement on changes to the working relationship between elected members and the appraisee. It should not be assumed that it is only the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive who may need to adjust his/her approach to the working relationship.

Appraisal and the Service's Forward Plan

12. Appraisal should be set in the context of the Service's objectives, priorities and targets, generally expressed in the forward plan or equivalent. Appraisal targets when taken as a whole should be related to agreed targets for the Service as a whole.

The Appraisal Cycle

13. Appraisal should take place on a predetermined date, at least annually, backed up by monitoring meetings on a regular basis at which targets can be reviewed for continuing relevance. A formal system of appraisal should not prevent continuous discussion regarding progress and performance.

The key elements of the appraisal process are:

- (i) continuous two way monitoring of performance against objectives;
- (ii) preparation for an appraisal interview;
- (iii) an appraisal interview where recent and current performance, future objectives and development needs are discussed;
- (iv) agreement should be reached on action required from either party to ensure required performance is achievable; and
- (v) the process of informal discussion regarding performance should continue.

Before the Appraisal Interview

14. It is acknowledged that an appraisal of the CFO/Chief Executive's performance will be enhanced by appropriate feedback from partner organisations or senior staff within other Fire & Rescue Services who have knowledge of his performance. So as not to

overburden the process, feedback will normally be requested from between 2 – 4 such external sources.

15. By way of preparation for the appraisal interview:

- (i) CFO/Chief Executive will agree a suitable date and time for the IPDR appraisal with the relevant Members at least one month in advance;
- (ii) CFO/Chief Executive will agree with the Chairman of the Authority the choice of any external partners who are to be asked to provide feedback on his performance and the process for requesting this; and
- (iii) The CFO/Chief Executive will complete and submit to the relevant members at least 7 days prior to the appraisal meeting, an appropriate self-assessment of:
 - his/her performance during the period under review including previously set targets and objectives;
 - suggested targets and objectives for the following 12 months; and
 - any areas for development or further training.

The Appraisal Interview and Afterwards

16. Key elements of the appraisal interview process and afterwards are:

- (i) all parties should be well informed and prepared for the interview;
- (ii) the process should be two way;
- (iii) the interview should be free from interruptions and notes taken when necessary. An agreed written record of key points should be produced at the conclusion of the process;
- (iv) the parties should concentrate as far as possible on established facts rather than unsubstantiated opinions;
- (v) targets should be agreed which are achievable and realistic in the light of available resources including time, and are capable of being monitored;
- (vi) any agreed development plans should be implemented within agreed timescales. The support and resources, including time, necessary to meet targets should be identified;
- (vii) The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive should be given a reasonable opportunity to correct any shortfalls in performance; and
- (viii) A date for the next review should be agreed.

Other Matters

17. The content of appraisal interviews should be treated as confidential to the participants. However, a report will be made to the Audit & Standards Committee that an appraisal interview has taken place.

18. This would not preclude the use of such information in other confidential proceedings.

PART 2 – DCFO / Monitoring Officer / Treasurer

19. The Individual Performance and Development Reviews of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer are the responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and will be undertaken by him.

20. Prior to the IPDR appraisal meetings for these officers, the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive will seek feedback and comment regarding the officers' performance from:

Chairman of the Authority
Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee
Chairman of Audit & Standards Committee

21. The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive will report the outcomes of the Officers' IPDR appraisals to the above members for information and approval.