**Enhanced Performance Development Reviews**

Maximising Potential

Manager Guidance

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# 1. Introduction

We all need to feel that we are listened to, understood and valued in our roles to achieve our maximum potential. Whether it is someone who is a reliable performer, someone who needs support to reach their potential or someone exceeding expectations who is ready for additional development. Maximising potential is about considering everyone as an individual and the development that is right for them. This needs to be balanced with the need to ensure development meets business objectives such that any costs or impacts on working time can be justified. The Performance and Development Review conversation and documentation supports this approach.

The Performance and Development Review (PDR) discussion provides a unique opportunity to hold an in depth and meaningful discussion about achievements, challenges, areas for development, suitability for progression and other career aspirations on an individual level that is usually not possible at other times. For this reason time allocated for this discussion can be precious and sought after, for both you and your employee. As the manager if you approach the discussion and prioritise your preparation for it on this basis it is more likely to be a productive meeting. The attitude you bring to the purpose and value of this meeting is likely to have a major impact on your employee’s morale, and productivity, and potentially their wellbeing too.

# 2. PDR Preparation

The main part of the PDR process is to identify and maximise how they are currently performing. This is achieved through open, honest and constructive conversation between the manager and the member of staff to explore where they are now, where they want to be and how to get there.

Remember this is a key opportunity to discuss what each of you think about performance and (crucially) why. A strong and open discussion could result in either or both of you altering your perspectives. If you approach it in this way you do not need to feel that the discussion will be unnecessarily contentious. Think of this as a way to explore each of your own ‘hilltops’ (the view from where you are standing. This has been echoed in our customer care training). Ultimately as the manager you will need to reach a conclusion on performance and suitability for development but, resist any temptation to do this until you have had a full and frank discussion.

The PDR form highlights six main areas:

* Looking Back
* Looking Forward
* Wellbeing
* Aspirations and 9-Box Grid discussion
* Development Summary; and
* Overall Assessment of Performance.

These areas have been sectioned and ordered on the PDR form to reflect the most likely flow of your discussion and for ease of reference. However, there is no right or wrong order in which to approach the PDR discussion. It is best if the conversation remains as fluid as possible. Ideally the employee being assessed will do most of the talking, with the manager directing the conversation to ensure maximum value is gained from the available time. This requires strong coaching skills for which training is available should you feel the need to refresh your skills.

The PDR is not the time to bring up any new and nasty surprises though this does provide the opportunity for a depth of conversation that may bring new issues to light.

Remember to talk to other key parties as part of your preparation. If, for example, you are new to managing the employee it may be appropriate for the previous manager to discuss and/or be involved with the ‘Looking Back’ element.

You can also consider 360 feedback (i.e. feedback from peers, others within the team, Members, partners, or other stakeholders the individual interacts with as a part of their job) or feedback from any extra roles (e.g. Staff Hub member, Mental Health First Aider, customer care champion etc.). For 360 feedback there is guidance and a form available on MyHR. (You should remember to feedback anonymously as it is rarely helpful to identify the source of specific feedback).

Useful documents to refer to for your preparation of this meeting include:

* Employee’s previous year PDR
* Employee’s preparation form for the PDR
* Employee’s Current Job Description and Person Specification
* [MVDC Values](http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=17197)
* Your service plan
* [Current Council strategy](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=17040)
* [Organogram](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/departmental-organisational-charts/) of your team structure

# 3. Looking Back

This section encourages reflection and discussion of the individual’s work over the previous 12 months.

## Tasks and objectives

Consider whether objectives have been met and/or tasks conducted effectively over the previous 12 months. Objectives may have changed over time or there may have been particular and unanticipated challenges completely outside the employee’s control. These should be fully discussed, recognised and recorded. Depth of discussion may depend on the breadth and depth of the role. Any specific task orientated objectives may present an opportunity for assessment as to whether they have been met (or not met) and why. More complex objectives may need a broader discussion about overall achievement.

Remember to include activities that support the organisation as a whole that the employee has volunteered to do (and are therefore not within the individual’s role). This could include, for example, a cross organisational project, being a Staff Hub member, Mental Health First Aider or customer care champion).

It is also advisable to review the information and statistics in relation to Health & Safety compliance for their team(s) via [Pentana](https://login.microsoftonline.com/b349b098-5198-407d-aede-27fa51575052/saml2). Contact a member of the Risk and Performance team for an overview as to compliance with management functions where relevant.

## Behaviours

The behavioural skills of, active listening, respect, caring, trustworthiness and leadership are key to all roles within the council, as reflected in our [Values](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/corporate-values/). Additionally there may be more specific behaviours required from a particular role (often reflected in the person specification for that role). Particular emphasis on individual behaviours, and the way in which it is realistic to expect the values to be demonstrated, will be dependent on the context for the role. Any individual in a customer facing role (or acting in that capacity) for example may have a particular emphasis on the behaviours in keeping with our [customer promise](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/media/pdf/i/s/Customer_Promise_2017.pdf).

While some behaviours may be more obvious than others in particular roles, you are expected to take this opportunity to discuss how strongly, or otherwise, these skills have been demonstrated, together with any others that you believe are particularly appropriate to that role. This conversation is opinion based, so be prepared to discuss why you hold your view, and do not position your view as final until you have understood the employee’s perspective sufficiently. It is most likely that a coaching approach to this conversation will work best. (Please remind yourselves of the principles of coaching from prior training, or discuss with your own line manager and liaise with the HR team if you wish to identify suitable information to refresh your understanding).

Identify with the individual which values you both believe to be most prominent and relevant to their role and how they have demonstrated their understanding and commitment to these in their work and interaction with colleagues and customers.

Identify with the individual which values are not demonstrated fully and why. Identify any opportunity to develop behaviours in these areas.

## Sample questions

The questions below should not be viewed as a checklist. They are intended to give you ideas of some things to have in your mind and as a starting point for discussion to understand each other’s perspectives.

* Does the employee believe he/she achieved what was expected? What reasons can they give for this view?
* Does the employee consider his/her work over the past 12 months to be goal orientated/task driven or more complex?
* Does the employee believe his/her objectives for their role were as anticipated in their last PDR? If not, why do they think they have changed?
* Does the employee believe his/her performance in the identified areas of work was as anticipated?
* Does the employee believe he/she has demonstrated MVDCs values in their day to day work?
* Did the employee have other key accountabilities or relationships outside your team? How does he/she believe they performed in these areas?
* How does he/she believe their performance compares to the previous years?
* If there is a notable difference from the previous year, why does he/she think this is the case?
* What impact does he/she believe they have had on the team’s performance as a whole? Was it positive or negative?
* What impact does he/she believe they have had on the organisation as a whole in meeting business objectives?
* Manager – What specific skills and behaviours has the manager demonstrated to ensure effective leadership and performance from their team/s?

# 4. Looking Forward

This section moves to future focus, aiming to discuss and agree the anticipated expectations for the individual over the next 12 months. Discussions should include reflections of the employee’s role (Job Description and Person Specification). This allows you to clarify the expectations for completion of future tasks and objectives for the coming year, and ensure there is a common understanding of how this sits within the remit of the employee’s role.

## Tasks

Use this section to discuss and record goal orientated tasks (specific, challenging & achievable) as well as complex objectives/goals (realistic expectations, overall direction, what is achievable, “what good looks like”). You may need to discuss different types of objectives with different team members and it is likely that your discussion will very much depend on the depth, breadth and complexity of the role. It is important to identify and recognise if this has changed over time, to discuss the reasons for this and to assess any likely changes to the skills requirements for the role as a consequence.

**NB: A manager is responsible not only for their own individual performance but for the work and performance of those under their line management. His/her objectives will therefore include the work of the team(s) they manage.**

## Behaviours

Identify which behavioural skills will be most relevant to achieve and demonstrate ‘success’ of identified objectives, and how the employee may develop or use the skills they have learned in previous years to assist them in achieving new objectives and goals. Refer to MVDC values (and your own team’s interpretation of them) to guide this discussion.

Identify any areas of “stretch” for the individual. These are objectives, tasks or behaviours that although challenging may allow the individual to develop skills and competencies that sit outside of the remit of their role. This provides the individual an opportunity to experience a sense of achievement and work towards higher goals (which may ultimately lead to a higher chance of promotion to a management position or skills specialism in the future).

## Sample questions

Again the questions are provided to give ideas for a starting point and to aid a coaching conversation during the PDR discussion, ensuring that the employee’s understanding of their role and the direction of future development are aligned to yours. By seeking the individual’s views, differences of opinion can be more easily identified and discussed, reducing potential for problem areas later. Clarity of value of contribution and purpose will be critical to motivation and therefore productivity and wellbeing:

* What/which key tasks or activities do you envisage the employee being responsible for? Or contributing to?
* How does this fit into your service plan?
* How does it fit into the overall [Council Strategy](http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=17040)?
* What does the employee understand as the purpose of their role within MVDC?
* What does ‘good’ look like?
* What key behaviours are most relevant to this, and how can he/she express ‘good’?
* Are these similar to skills already developed and demonstrated?
* Would it help the individual demonstrate success if he/she were to focus more on development of any particular aspects?

# 5. Wellbeing

Both internal (job related) and external (home related) factors affect an individual’s work performance. This section therefore provides an opportunity to have a rounded conversation which will allow you to consider providing support where needed. It is fine if the individual does not wish to discuss their home life, however this will prevent you as their manager from being able to take personal circumstances into account if there are any work related performance concerns. You must not take rumour or speculation from colleagues or other members of the team as fact.

**Sample questions**

* Are there any points in relation to work, the working environment, morale, working relationships, equipment, etc. the employee would like to discuss?
* Are there any other areas of change outside the individual’s role (relocation, retirement, care for a dependent etc.?) that they would like to discuss?
* Can the organisation help the employee to prepare or could any of our other employment policies potentially be appropriate to assist?

The individual may wish to discuss external factors that they feel could affect their ability either to carry out their current role as effectively as in previous years or that may reduce their ability to develop and progress further within the organisation at this time. A fuller understanding of this will assist you in assessing capacity when agreeing your service plans. **This will be crucial for the** [**resource planning meeting**](http://molly.mole-valley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=50478) **with your Executive Head.**

NB: The PDR is not the appropriate place to formally agree or disagree any contractual changes. It can however set a marker that the employee wishes to discuss a formal request (e.g. flexible working, reduction in hours, early retirement).

# 6. Aspirations & 9-Box Grid Discussion

**What are the key areas identified for individual career aspirations?**

**Using the 9-Box Grid**

Effective and honest communication is at the heart of development conversations. The 9-Box Grid is tool designed to enable a two way conversation to review Performance and Potential for progression at a given point in time. The 9-Box Grid (below) provides a guide to help the manager outline, in a constructive way, where the individual’s performance currently sits within the team and the wider organisation, with consideration for the individual’s overall performance as well as the behaviours, and values that they demonstrate.

Thinking about this information as a snapshot is a useful way to view it, as we know that individual performance and potential change and evolve constantly and can be influenced by many factors. To this end the 9-Box Grid is not about putting people in a box but rather guiding them to finding the right solutions and taking action to support them towards desired personal and organisational goals. An individual’s ‘position’ on the grid should have a shelf life of no more than 12 months, where it will be reviewed again with fresh eyes.

This two-way conversation is about supporting an individual to reflect and consider the potential they already have within their current role, identifying and discussing any future aspirations they many have and may be likened to a coaching conversation in many respects. The 9-box grid helps to identify where the individual sits in relation to their potential role, and then to assist with identifying next supportive developmental steps for them, where this is needed.

It is important as part of this conversation to establish not only the individual’s potential but also their desire to progress. There will be a variety of reasons why an individual may or may not feel ready to pursue career progression or develop their technical skills further. It is important to work with the individual to develop a career plan that works for them rather than making assumptions about what might be best. A disengaged employee is less likely to succeed in their development, even where they clearly have the skills to progress.

The broad discussion points from this conversation and rationale for the point at which the individual sits within the grid should be recorded. The most likely placement for the majority of staff will be ‘Core Performer’ which indicates that the individual is working in the right job.

Individuals identified in the top right box are identified as high achievers and may therefore be considered ‘ready to progress’. These individuals may be suitable LEAP candidates and the type of development they require should be explored in more detail to ensure the most suitable opportunities are identified, where possible. This may require further conversations with your manager and/or HR to support you in this process.

Individuals identified in the bottom left box may require support and development to ensure that they are reaching the requirements of their current role. Unless they are very new to the role a Performance Improvement Plan may be needed to identify areas for improvement and outline any identified support that can be provided. In this case the PDR discussion should not be used as a format for identifying improvement needs (i.e. formal capability review) but may be a platform for discussing progress and any further support that can be offered.

Further guidance to assist this conversation is available on Molly.

**Career conversations – Management progression**

There are particular qualities that the organisation identifies as essential for those in senior and business management roles and are often reflected in the job descriptions and person specifications for these positions. Demonstration or development of these qualities can therefore be discussed when an individual has shown interest in working towards a position of management and leadership within the organisation.

They are likely to be evidenced through an individual demonstrating core skills and behaviours in the identified areas in Section 9.

**9 Box Grid**

**Qualified/Skilled**

Can advance in their chosen field if they have the capacity and appetite to do so, but equally valuable to develop further expertise where they are

**Developing**

Has capacity & appetite to develop at their current level or potentially progress beyond current specialisation within a few years into new and wider challenges

**Progressing**

Demonstrates the potential, appetite, motivation and experience to perform at the next level now or within the next 12 months into new and wider challenges

**Exceeds Expectations**

Outstanding performance against objectives, achieves more than what is expected of them, and demonstrates role modelling of behaviours required beyond their role

**Key Contributor** (‘Go To’ person in specialist field)

High performance, consistently adding value in own field.

Potentially ‘expert’ stage of career with strong technical skills

Role models behaviours of organisation

Consistent results and brings added value to tasks given

Supportive team player

Happy to stay in current position or deepen expertise as opportunity arises.

**Strong Performer** (Pivotal and Flexible)

High performance with consistency of results across a variety of assignments

Brings added value to tasks given.

Acts wider than professional background.

Role models behaviours of the organisation

Shows upward potential, whilst happy in current position for the time being have shown desire to progress in the medium future, either within or outside of own specialism.

Secondary for critical positions; likely to shift to key roles over time

**Progressive Performer (**High potential to go further)

Demonstrates highest levels of performance, potential and ambition to move on.

High performer, bringing added value to assignments with lots of potential and capacity for progressive development opportunities.

Role models behaviours of organisation/role.

Demonstrates and displays core skills

First call to fill critical positions

**Meets Expectations**

Meets the expectations for performance against objectives and behaviours required at the level for their role

**Performer** (Developing in specialist field)

Good reliable performance.

Behaves professionally in line with role.

May have progression potential.

Not currently demonstrating fully developed skillset or desire to move outside of professional field

**Core Performer** (Solid/adaptable)

Good rounded performance.

Behaves professionally in line with role.

Works wider than professional background.

Could progress beyond role in the long term if appetite and clear capacity for further development demonstrated

**Rising Performer** (Capacity for key roles)

Strong potential/appetite to progress

Good rounded performance.

Behaves professionally in line with role.

Demonstrates capacity and ability to be stretched further.

Development required to move on/up

**Partially met expectations**

Below ‘met expectations’ against performance objectives and behaviours required at the level for their role

**Supported Performer** (Needs support)

May be new to the role (new recruit).

Being supported to reach their potential.

Further demonstration of performance and behaviours required to meet the full needs of current role.

May be in the wrong role – review skills vs. role criteria

**Developing Performer** (Needs stretching)

Low performance but showing some ability to be progressed outside of professional role.

Being supported, needs pushing and stretching to reach full potential.

May be bored, under-used, lack of understanding of role requirements or targets, in wrong role

**Emerging Performer** (Needs time)

Not yet demonstrated results, or full potential in a new position/development assignment.

Future performance will allow better assessment

Performance

Progression

# 7. Development summary

**What further training and/or development is needed in their role?**

## Mandatory learning for current year

Any mandatory training requirements needed for the individual to fulfil the requirements of their role should also be recorded.

Current organisational mandatory e-learning is:

* Diversity, Equality and Discrimination
* Introduction to Health & Safety
* Freedom of Information
* Data Protection Essentials - every 12 months
* Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessment for staff who use computers - every 24 months
* Safeguarding children, young people and adults - every 36 months

These modules need to be completed in the given timelines by all employees.

Please note managers can view the learning records for all individuals in their team(s) in iTrent. Instructions for how to do this are held on [Molly](https://molevalleydc.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/Team-HRa/ETKIYcbejt1IoPerggU9vF4BWGQMtE4IkeiezryXs_HGbw?e=h4W4Uj). It is advisable that you do this as preparation for the PDR and to ensure mandatory training has been completed. As a manager, assessment of your own performance may in part depend on ensuring compliance with mandatory courses across your team.

There is also regular customer care training for all new employees and all managers are required to participate in management development learning and any other relevant subjects related to their management development and role. (Management learning is specifically reported on through the workforce planning process).

Other mandatory training is rolled out from time to time.

**Development**

Following a discussion about aspirations and potential for any progression or identified development it is important to identify the ways in which you and/or the organisation can support the individual to achieve these goals. The type of development that is needed will be dependent on both the employee’s identified performance and potential (i.e. their placement within the 9 Box Grid) as well as their aspirations and ‘will’ for progression and/or development (potentially influenced by both wellbeing internal and external factors).

While key training needs and development through identified courses or apprenticeships may meet the needs of one person, coaching, mentoring or online training may be the right path for another. Various routes should be explored. Where budgetary challenges may restrict expenditure to training, cost effective solutions should be explored and expectations managed. It is important not to over promise, raising expectation that cannot be fulfilled can be damaging to morale. Think creatively together to reach a manageable solution and discuss options with HR where alternatives may need to be explored.

Use this section to record any areas of performance where further training, development and/or support is identified.

The [Learning and Development policy](https://molly.molevalley.gov.uk/myhr/learning-and-development/all-staff/) provides information on the different types of learning and development available to managers and staff.

Remember: If the individual is happy in their current role and does not wish to have any further training or development, the manager must always assess whether there are any development requirements to support the changing needs of the organisation.

**LEAP (Learn, Engage, Apply, Perform)**

What is LEAP?

LEAP is designed for those who have the skill and the desire, assessed through the Performance and Development Review (PDR) process, to progress further, either within the organisation or externally. It provides an opportunity for eligible individuals to have focussed attention paid to their development needs, with the potential for a bespoke plan drawn up to assist. It is an enhancement to the PDR process facilitating this discussion/attention for those who are eligible.

Employees should be identified for potential for LEAP support through their PDR discussion. By identifying the individual as a high performer with high potential and a desire to progress you can discuss the type of support they may need to assist them to reach their goals. Where the level of support required sits within the service remit (i.e. through coaching , mentoring and/or job shadowing), development goals and learning needs can be agreed between the employee and the manager. Where the level and scope of development sits outside the individual’s current role the employee may be considered as a LEAP candidate and this discussion should be identified and recorded as part of their PDR. This will inform further service discussions with the relevant Executive Head. SLT will have an annual collective discussion to confirm the individuals agreed as suitable for stretch development under LEAP or noting those that are being developed for stretch development in current specialisms.

A full discussion about the employee’s aspirations, performance and potential are therefore essential to ensuring suitable individuals are identified for bespoke support with their development.

Further information about LEAP can be found in the Learning and Development Policy.

# 8. Overall assessment of performance

Provide a conclusion on the individual’s performance based on your conversation and recorded information. The length should be appropriate to the circumstances. You should include reference to both tasks and behaviours.

You should make your conclusion clear (even if the context is complicated) so that the employee can understand how you think they are doing – e.g. strong, fair, weak.

You should provide an assessment of any main areas of context that you consider to be highly relevant. This is also the place to bring in any additional feedback you have had (e.g. 360, projects/forums).

Make sure any shortfalls are backed up with a development plan (and performance monitoring where required). Any serious shortfalls requiring performance monitoring should have been discussed prior to the PDR.

Your conclusion can also include a summary of the individual’s readiness for progression and any identified development to assist them. Where an individual has been identified by their manager as a suitable candidate to be considered further as part of the LEAP programme, the rationale should be set out here (see the L&D Policy for detailed information on LEAP).

Overall performance including the above elements must be provided to each BM/Exec Head as appropriate as part of the annual [Resource Planning meeting](http://molly.mole-valley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=50478). (This is an overall team discussion and review to ensure effective service planning. This discussion will happen at least once a year in time for the new business plans and will also provide part of the basis for Business Manager assessments). Ideally, however, regular discussions will take place throughout the year.

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| **Final notes:** **Performance and development needs must be reviewed on an ongoing basis through regular one to ones, and, in cases where there are problems, through specific interventions using employment policies and procedures and with advice from the HR team as necessary.** **Amongst other things, the PDR is a critical management tool providing management information for a wrap up meeting with each Executive Head to discuss and assess overall team performance, as well as individual performance and succession planning.** **One copy of the completed PDR form should be kept by the manager and one by the employee. Completion of the PDR process must be recorded on i-Trent as a ‘learning event’ and the PDR form must then be saved within the employee record of i-Trent –** [**instructions how to do this**](http://molly.mole-valley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=51543)[**here.**](http://molly.mole-valley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=51543) **(NB Completion rates will be proactively monitored).****If the employee is concerned that any information (particularly relating to wellbeing) is particularly sensitive or personal (and does not fall within our stated grounds for sharing information as contained within our Employer’s Privacy Notice) they should highlight the information that they are not providing consent to share with anyone but their direct manager. This information should be removed before the final form is sent to HR. Information relating to performance in your role does not need consent to be processed in accordance with GDPR principles and insofar as it relates to management of your employment contract with us. (See Employment Privacy Notice for further details).****Business Managers must ensure completion of PDRs within their team at the very latest by the end of March. All PDR information and service data, including LEAP candidate information, will be provided to the relevant Executive Head prior to the annual resource meeting. This information will inform succession planning, workforce planning and allocation of any available training budgets for development for that year.****Remember, the PDR is just the start, the conversation never ends. Both the employee and manager need to keep it open and go back to it as often as they can. For example in 1-2-1s, informal discussions and in any other ways that demonstrate the value the employee brings to the organisation.** |

# 9. Business Manager Core Skills

