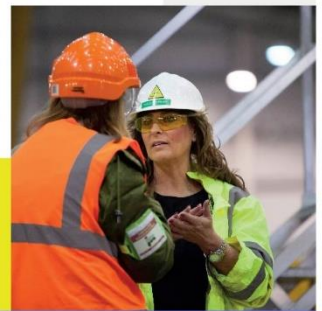
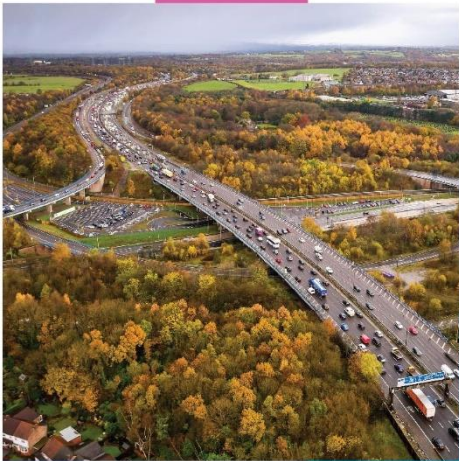


PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT POLICY



The purpose of this policy is to support and assist employees in improving and maintaining their performance to an acceptable standard. The primary aim of this policy is to help the employee meet any shortfall in their knowledge, skills and competencies needed for them to perform to an acceptable standard within their role.

1. Introduction

The procedure incorporated within this document applies to all employees of Transport for the North (TfN).

It is accepted by TfN that to assist in the effective functioning of the organisation and in the general interest of efficiency, reasonable standards of job performance are expected of all employees.

The Performance Improvement Policy is not intended to deal with cases of wilful neglect of duty or similar instances which will be handled within the normal Disciplinary Policy. Nor is it intended to deal with cases of misconduct and capability, which are more appropriately dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

Line Managers play a key role in the development of their employees and the setting of targets and standards. TfN has and will continue to undertake a number of development initiatives in order to equip Line Managers with the necessary skills required to carry out their role effectively.

It is expected that Line Managers will endeavour, through discussion and counselling, to resolve any alleged deficiencies in performance before having recourse to the formal procedure.

The Performance Improvement has been designed to ensure that employees are dealt with in a fair, equitable and reasonable manner and that necessary development and/or other appropriate assistance is put in place to assist the employee in performing to an acceptable level for their role.

2. General Principles

Supporting employees to improve their performance following a minor breach or minor shortfall in performance is an everyday feature of routine management.

In the event that there has been a minor breach in performance, the Line Manager will in the first instance seek to resolve this matter informally. The Line Manager must keep a detailed record of events which must, where appropriate, be presented should the case progress to the formal stage.

In cases where the breach in performance is of a serious nature or where informal management of performance has not resolved the matter as indicated above, then the formal procedure will be invoked.

The scope for invoking the formal procedure may include a failure (but is not exhaustive):

- to meet agreed objectives, performance and behaviour standards as set out in the TfN appraisal process;
- non-performance of normal duties and function;
- lack of application to duties;
- substandard job performance.

No action under any stage of the Performance Improvement Policy will be taken against an employee until the circumstances of the breach in performance have been fully investigated.

At all stages of the Performance Improvement Policy the employee will be informed of the full facts of the alleged breach in performance against him/her and shall have the right and opportunity to state his/her case fully.

At all stages of the formal procedure the employee will be advised of the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union Representative. The onus is on the employee to arrange such representation.

An employee will have the right to appeal against any decisions or actions imposed upon them under the appeal process set out in TfN's Disciplinary Policy.

The Performance Improvement may be implemented at any time if the circumstances of the breach in performance warrant such action.

All parties involved in the Performance Improvement Policy will be advised that these matters will be in the strictest confidence. Any party found to be in breach of this confidentiality clause may be dealt with through the Disciplinary Policy.

All employees have a responsibility to achieve a satisfactory standard of performance and shall be given all reasonable help, development and assistance to achieve the required standard.

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to ensure that employees are made aware of required standards through documents, such as:

- Role Profile (which must be up to date);
- Employee's "Values" documentation (including Vision and Values, TfN Handbook, Policies & Procedures);

- TfN and Personal Objectives, as set out via the annual appraisal process.

The standards and targets set will be reasonable, taking account of the employee's grade and position in the organisation. It is also the responsibility of each Line Manager to ensure that appropriate development and supervision is provided to employees to assist them in their day to day work.

TfN is committed to the development of its employees to ensure that all employees are provided with the opportunity to attain the skills, knowledge, experience and competencies to undertake the duties required of them. All employees have the opportunity to identify any development requirements with their Line Managers through the Appraisal process.

3. Formal Procedure

The scope for invoking the formal procedure may include (but is not exclusive) to:

- A failure to meet agreed targets, objectives and behaviours;
- Non-performance of normal duties and function;
- Lack of application to duties;
- Substandard job performance.

At all stages of the formal procedure the employee concerned will be interviewed by their Line Manager. A HR & Skills Representative will be present to ensure consistency and fairness.

At all stages of the Formal Procedure the Line Manager will, in the first instance seek to gain the agreement of the employee concerned.

At all stages of the Formal Procedure an employee will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union Representative. The onus is on the employee to arrange such representation.

At all stages of this procedure the employee will be provided with all documentary evidence on which the Line Manager intends to rely a minimum of 48 hours prior to the review meeting.

The employee will receive in writing the outcome of each stage of the formal procedure, which will also clearly outline the agreed timescales for which there must be an improvement in performance.

Should there be no improvement in the employee's performance or a repetition of the breach in performance following the third and final Performance Improvement Review Meeting, this may result in a decision being made to dismiss the employee with notice or as an alternative to

dismissal with the employee's agreement to transfer or demote the employee.

Stage One – First Performance Review Meeting

The Line Manager will set out details of the alleged breach in performance to the employee.

The Line Manager and the employee will discuss and agree wherever possible, the remedial action that needs to be undertaken to address the breach in performance.

The Line Manager will discuss the support and development available and agree wherever possible, the level of support to be provided to enable the employee to effectively carry out their role and function.

The Line Manager will set the performance targets and objectives that need to be met within a specified timescale.

The Line Manager will set out how they intend to monitor the employee's performance during this time.

The Line Manager will set the date for the Interim Review Meeting(s), which will take place at no less than four weekly intervals following this meeting.

The Line Manager will set the date for the Stage Two Performance Improvement Meeting.

The Line Manager will remind the employee that he/she could be liable to dismissal should there be no improvement or repetition of the breach in performance.

The HR & Skills Representative will place in writing to the employee the agreed remedial plan, confirming the date of both the Interim Review Meeting(s) and the Stage Two Review Meeting.

Stage Two – Second Performance Review Meeting

The Line Manager will confirm to the employee that the performance targets have been successfully met and that no further action will be taken. The Line Manager will advise the employee that the copy of the remedial letter shall be removed from the employee's personal file following a three month period.

If the performance targets have not been successfully met, the Line Manager will discuss and agree wherever possible, with the employee the next steps to be taken.

Support and development needs will be re-addressed and a remedial action plan implemented.

The Line Manager will remind the employee that he/she could be liable to dismissal should there be no improvement or repetition of the breach in performance.

The Line Manager will set the date for the Interim Review Meeting(s), which will take place at no less than four weekly intervals following this meeting.

The Line Manager will set the date for the Stage Three Review Meeting.

The HR & Skills Representative will place in writing to the employee the agreed remedial plan, confirming the date of both the Interim Review Meeting(s) and the Stage Three Review Meeting.

Stage Three – Final Performance Review Meeting

If the targets set at Stage Two have been met, the Line Manager, in the presence of the HR & Skills Representative, will confirm to the employee that no further action will be taken. The Line Manager will advise the employee that copies of the remedial letters shall be removed from the employee's personal file following a further six-month period.

In the event of the targets set at Stage Two not being met, the Line Manager, in the presence of the HR & Skills Representative, will conduct a formal review meeting, which may result in a decision being made to dismiss the employee with notice or if the employee agrees to transfer or demote them.

At the meeting the Line Manager will present all the documentary evidence in relation to the employee's performance and will also have the opportunity to question the employee and their representative.

The Line Manager may ask questions about the employee's response, where necessary, and again allow the employee to put forward their version of events in mitigation.

Following all evidence being presented and considered the meeting will then be adjourned to enable the Line Manager to reach a decision.

On the same day, wherever possible, the employee will be informed verbally of the decision and reasons given on how the decision has been reached. Dismissal with notice or as an alternative to dismissal, transfer or demotion may be considered by the Line Manager. The decision will be confirmed in writing, normally within 5 working days.

4. Performance Improvement - Appeals Procedure

An employee is entitled to appeal against any decisions or actions implemented under the Performance Improvement Procedure. This must be in writing, stating the grounds of appeal in full, to the Head of HR within 5 working days from the date of the written notification of the

decision. Full details of the appeal process can be found in the Disciplinary Policy.





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