

Mentoring Policy

March 2016

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Mentoring Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy has been designed to complement other training and development policies and activities within Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (referred to in this document as the West Suffolk councils).
- 1.2 It has been developed from the councils' overall vision and mission and reflects our belief in the development of all our people, both full and part time, and permanent and temporary, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion or sexual orientation.
- 1.3 It complements our existing learning and development policy, and is based on the following principles:
- We encourage **self-development** in a way that maximises the contribution the individual can make to the councils productivity and success.
 - We wish to **encourage people to seek support and guidance** from those who are experienced and who can share their knowledge and understanding in a way that is supportive and generous.
 - The councils wish to provide a **structured approach** to staff development that embraces a number of opportunities for people to learn and develop their skills and knowledge.

2. Purpose of Mentoring

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
- Position mentoring as a key activity within the councils' overall approach to staff learning and development;
 - Differentiate mentoring from other developmental activities such as coaching and training;
 - Provide information on an individual's progress and development within the organisation that is additional to that given within the performance review process;
 - Establish what skills and experiences are needed to develop an individual's career;
 - Provide opportunities to learn from someone with a greater or different understanding of the organisation;
 - Provide the individual with an objective and alternative source of advice and information;
 - Enable both managers and employees to understand the different roles within the mentoring relationship and how each should be undertaken; and
 - Provide opportunities for the development of all staff through the mentoring relationship, either as mentor or mentee.
- 2.3 Decisions on the suitability of staff to be mentored and the applicability of mentoring programmes will generally be determined through outcomes from the performance review process, in which individual training and development needs are identified within a personal development plan.
- 2.4 However, there may be occasions where certain members of staff, such as new employees who are not necessarily seeking or being considered for promotion, may also benefit from a period of sustained support through a mentoring programme.

2.5 In both circumstances mentoring can be a very effective development activity.

3. How Mentors and Mentees will be Matched

3.1 The decision as to who will be eligible for the mentoring scheme will rest with the line manager and Human Resources, and will be based on outputs from the performance review process and individuals' personal development plans.

3.2 The line manager, Human Resources and mentee will discuss the choice of mentor, who will undertake his/her responsibilities subject to the availability of time and other resources. The match will be based on the perceived "best fit" of both parties, in terms of overall attitude, approach, experience, etc. In the event of a "mismatch" occurring between the mentor and mentee, a substitute will be found. In most cases the mentor will come from within the West Suffolk councils and will receive training prior to commencing the role.

4. Responsibilities of the Mentor

4.1 The mentor will have responsibilities to:

- establish and agree a mentoring contract between the parties in terms of regular meetings, feedback, timescales, action plan and resources required;
- encourage regular meetings with the mentee and oversee their progress against the agreed timetable;
- liaise with the line manager over the mentee's personal development plan and find ways of helping to take this forward;
- encourage networking on the part of the mentee to progress their career as appropriate;
- help to evaluate the overall mentoring process and its outcomes; and
- take responsibility for the mentor/mentee relationship and its success within the scheme.

5. Responsibilities of the Mentee

5.1 The mentee will have responsibilities to:

- initiate regular meetings with the mentor within an agreed time frame;
- evaluate their current and future contribution and agree relevant courses of action to ensure the continuation of progress;
- liaise with the mentor about any alterations required to the personal development plan;
- monitor the progress of their personal development plan and deal with any problems or issues arising from it; and

- take responsibility for the mentor/mentee relationship and its success within the scheme.

6. Training

- 6.1 All employees selected as either mentors or mentees will receive training in their new role to ensure the success of the scheme. This training will be mandatory and will require staff to understand fully the differences between training and development, coaching, and mentoring as they are undertaken within the organisation.

7. Length of Mentoring Programme

- 7.1 Decisions on the length of the mentoring programme will be determined by the individual needs. However, as a guideline, a scheme will normally last for a period of up to one year, and not less than six months.

8. Publicising the Scheme

- 8.1 The scheme will be publicised through normal internal communication channels. Details will, also, be provided on the intranet.

9. Confidentiality

- 9.1 All meetings held between mentor and mentee will be confidential to those individuals. Where the line manager and/or Human Resources are involved in any issue, there may be a requirement to include these individuals in the discussion.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 10.1 Information will be collected and monitored for equality purposes. The nature of the issue will be recorded, but the parties will not be recorded. Where there is an outcome this will, also, be recorded.
- 10.2 All parties involved in the mediation will be consulted for feedback on the process.

11. Enquiries and Change Control

- 11.1 All enquiries relating to this document should be directed to Human Resources.
- 11.2 Copies of this document can be found on our intranet site under HR policies or can be obtained by contacting Human Resources.
- 11.3 This policy will be subject to review which will be initiated by Human Resources in consultation our recognised trade union.
- 11.4 Suggestions for any changes to this document should also be forwarded to Human Resources.
- 11.5 For further information on mediation you may contact a member of the Human Resources team or visit the ACAS website www.acas.org.uk

12. Revisions

Date of review or revision	Reason	Author
March 2016	Drafted	Vikki Abbott

APPENDICES

Example: Mentoring Contract

1. The Nature of the Partnership

This document has been prepared as an agreement between [] ("the mentee") and [] ("the mentor") to establish the boundaries of the mentoring relationship and define what each party wishes to get from the mentoring process.

The relationship between both parties will be established as a partnership, ie both parties will work together to ensure the success of the development activity for the mentee. This means that:

- the mentor is responsible for developing and maintaining his/her competence in mentoring; and
- the mentee is responsible for developing his/her ability to perform well.

Both the mentor and the mentee will enter the partnership in an open and honest way, share information, viewpoints and feelings constructively, and provide feedback as appropriate. At no time will the mentor intrude into private and confidential issues without permission from the mentee.

Agreement will be reached at the start of the contract regarding the number of meetings and the timing of these meetings. The parties should not take up too much of each other's time and both parties should, if at all possible, maintain the agreed timescales of the agreement. Where additional meetings are required, these must be negotiated and agreed between the parties.

Confidentiality must be maintained by both parties at all times.

Either party may dissolve the relationship following mutual discussion and agreement.

2. The Role and Responsibilities of the Mentor

During the period of the mentoring contract, the mentor will seek to:

- establish and agree a mentoring contract between the parties in terms of regular meetings, feedback, timescales, action plan and resources required;
- encourage regular meetings with the mentee and oversee their progress against the agreed timetable;
- liaise with the mentee's line manager over their personal development plan and find ways of helping to take this forward;
- encourage networking on the part of the mentee to progress his/her career as appropriate;
- help to evaluate the overall mentoring process and its outcomes; and

- take responsibility for the mentor/mentee relationship and its success within the scheme.

3. The Role and Responsibilities of the Mentee

During the period of the mentoring contract, the mentee will seek to:

- initiate regular meetings with the mentor within an agreed time frame;
- evaluate their current and future contribution and agree relevant courses of action to ensure the continuation of progress;
- liaise with the mentor about any alterations required to the personal development plan;
- monitor the progress of their personal development plan and deal with any problems or issues arising from it; and
- take responsibility for the mentor/mentee relationship and its success within the scheme.

4. Provision of Feedback

Both the mentor and the mentee will provide feedback to each other on a regular basis to ensure that each party knows and understands what progress is being made. This feedback will usually be given verbally, but may on occasion be in writing.

Any written records maintained will be subject to statutory regulation under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

5. Action planning

At the start of the mentoring process, an action plan will be agreed between both parties. At the end of each formal discussion, the mentee will complete this action plan to ensure that progress can be monitored and appropriate feedback provided.

6. Evaluation of outcomes

At the end of the mentoring process, an evaluation form will be completed by both parties, as part of the overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme. Information on this form will be used as part of the overall assessment of the mentee's progress within a career development plan. Data will, also, be used to ensure the effectiveness of the mentor and to inform their further development in this role.

7. Agreement to the contract

In signing this contract we hereby agree to its terms.

Mentee's signature:

Date:

Mentor's signature:

Date:

Example: Mentoring Evaluation Form

Both parties should complete their section and sign the form when they have agreed on its content.

Section A - to be completed by the Mentor

1. What development needs were agreed at the start of the programme for the Mentee and how have these been addressed?

2. What actions did the Mentee take to ensure his/her learning and development during the period of the mentoring contract and how effective were these?

3. What went well in the partnership?

4. What could have been improved in the partnership?

5. What further development does the Mentee require and how should this be addressed?

6. What personal learning and development have you taken from this experience and how will you use this in the future?

Section B - to be completed by the Mentee

1. What development needs were agreed at the start of the programme with the Mentor and how have these been addressed?

2. What actions did the Mentor take to ensure your learning and development during the period of the mentoring contract and how effective were these?

3. What went well in the partnership?

4. What could have been improved in the partnership?

5. What changes should the Mentor make to ensure the success of future mentoring partnerships?

6. What personal learning and development have you taken from this experience and how will you use this in the future?

Mentor's Signature:

[]

Date:

[]

Mentee's signature:

[]

Date:

[]