

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE 6 May 2014
DIRECTOR Angela Scott
TITLE OF REPORT Revised Managing Leavers Procedure
REPORT NUMBER: CG14/041
CHECKLIST RECEIVED: Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report updates the existing Managing Leavers procedure which has been reviewed to take into account 5 years of operation and to incorporate a stronger focus on knowledge capture and supporting workforce planning and succession planning. The revised procedure applies to all employees of Aberdeen City Council who leave either through voluntary resignation, expiry of their fixed-term contract, retirement, redundancy or internal transfer.

The procedure does not however apply to those workers who are employed on a casual or relief basis or employees who are dismissed from employment for disciplinary, attendance or work performance reasons.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The committee is requested to:

- i) Approve the revised procedure as detailed in Appendix A.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The procedure is of mutual benefit to both employees and the Council. Exiting employees have the opportunity to leave on positive terms, and where appropriate, the position vacated is improved upon for the new employee. By applying the Managing Leavers process, the line managers may also have the opportunity to identify any training and development needs for employees. In addition, data from the leavers'

questionnaire may also help to inform the workforce place at both a strategic and Service level.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The original Managing Leavers Policy and Procedure was introduced in March 2006 to increase the focus of understanding of the reasons for employees choosing to leave a job or the Council and to assist in managers gathering useful information. In October 2008 the procedure was revised to incorporate knowledge capture on exit to ensure valuable knowledge and experience was not lost at a time of major reorganisation within the Council.

Exiting employees are expected to complete an online knowledge capture questionnaire as well as an online leaver's questionnaire and a final leaver's debrief. For every knowledge capture questionnaire completed, a Knowledge Capture Record specific to the role is produced and available to the line manager on the Managing Leavers online system. Overall, the main reasons for the proposed changes to the procedure include:

- Recognising the importance of capturing, acting on and learning from leavers information to support high performance
- Improving the response rate of the knowledge capture questionnaire to encourage knowledge retention
- Using leaver's information to inform the strategic workforce plan
- Making informed decisions that focus on a sustainable future
- Enhancing employee engagement and considering their views in the decision making process
- Encouraging communication and sharing to improve service delivery
- Ensuring business continuity when employees leave the Council by enhancing the consistency of delivery

The table below summarises the revisions and the reasons for these changes.

| Former | Revised | Reasons |
|---|---|---|
| Knowledge capture questionnaire consists of 13 questions requiring time and effort and causes confusion | 1. Cut number of questions and reduce duplication of effort. Jargon has also been omitted (see Appendix B) | To encourage completion and ensure information is fit for purpose |
| Limited use of Leaver's questionnaire data | 2. Questions have been rationalised and refined 3. HR&OD colleague assigned to analyse data and report findings to each SMT regularly (see Appendix C) | To provide evidence to support strategic workforce plan |
| The leaver's debrief enables discussions of issues | 4. The mandatory debrief has been omitted from this revised | To reduce time taken to carry out procedure. The leaver's |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| identified as part of knowledge capture and leaver's questionnaires | procedure. A voluntary meeting is offered in its place | questionnaire offers an opportunity to provide extensive feedback |
|---|--|---|

6. IMPACT

The procedure supports the *Strategic Workforce Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18* in that it will help to ‘*manage required changes to the workforce in a structured, planned and fully consulted basis*’ as well as giving consideration to develop workforce skills and capacity and manage talent within the organisation. It is anticipated that the leavers’ information will provide evidence to inform workforce planning and succession planning within each Service and Directorate.

It also links to the Council vision ‘*Aberdeen – the Smarter City 2012 - 2017*’ in that it the supports the *Smarter People* high level priority where ‘*we aim to have a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the city/region economy.*’

The procedure also relates directly to a number of the core behaviours including communication, engaging with employees and enabling the Council to be future focused.

In addition, the changes to the procedure are minor and therefore should not have an impact on employees of the Council. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the amended procedure.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

By effectively managing leavers, the Council will gain access to vital leaver information which will help to inform and identify areas for improvement and ultimately contribute to the retention of well-trained, highly skilled and experienced employees. The main benefit of retaining knowledge before an employee leaves the Council is that key, strategic and operational knowledge will be gathered and can be used in the recruitment and induction process. This will have a benefit on business continuity as well as service delivery, performance and productivity.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

MANAGING LEAVERS

PROCEDURE

*Approved by the Finance, Policy and
Resources on*

Contents

Section 1: Introduction

- **Policy Statement**

Section 2: Scope and Core Principles

- **Scope**
- **Core Principles**

Section 3: The Procedure

- **Step 1: Receive Employee's Resignation**
 - **Informal Discussion**
 - **Exploring Reasons for Leaving**
- **Step 2: Issue Knowledge Capture and Leavers Questionnaires**
- **Step 3: Actions and Monitoring**
 - **Management Actions**
 - **Evaluation and Monitoring**

Section 4: Review of the procedure

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Policy Statement

- It is the policy of our Council to recognise the contribution and commitment of our workforce. We are fully committed to the provision of a good working environment for all of our employees. However, it is acknowledged that for a variety of reasons, people will leave the Council, some after a relatively short time and others after many years of employment.

- Employees who have decided to leave may have knowledge and information of considerable value, which may be used by the Council to improve service delivery and address critical workplace and recruitment and retention issues. It is vital therefore that such information is not lost but gathered from leavers in order to meet the needs of the Council in relation to its strategic objectives and ensure return on investment in training and skills development. A Managing Leavers Procedure has therefore been developed to ensure that, as far as possible, valuable information is captured.

- The Council will follow a procedure, which not only provides a channel for gathering valuable employee knowledge and information but also records an employee's reasons for leaving, including perceptions of workplace issues.

- The information gathered may also be used to aid the Council's compliance with the monitoring aspects of Equality Legislation in relation to conducting equality monitoring in employment where employment ceases. This is underpinned by the Council's commitment to ensuring equalities and eradicating discrimination within the workplace

- This procedure is therefore designed to provide a framework to facilitate the collection of vital information from employees when leaving their employment, and help to effectively and positively manage leavers from the organization.

SECTION 2: SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

Scope

This procedure applies to employees of Aberdeen City Council who leave employment, regardless of length of service. It covers all employees who leave either through voluntary resignation, expiry of their fixed-term contract, retirement, redundancy or internal transfer. The procedure does not however apply to those workers who are employed on a casual or relief basis or employees who are dismissed from employment for disciplinary, attendance or work performance reasons.

Core Principles

- Employees (see scope) will have the opportunity to give feedback when they leave their job.
- The purpose of the **Knowledge Capture Questionnaire** is to capture as much tacit and explicit knowledge from departing employees. Employees will be given an opportunity to indicate progress on current and outstanding tasks and to specify the knowledge, skills, contacts and resources required to carry out key tasks and activities specific to the employee's current role.
- Information provided in the **Leavers Questionnaire** will not be taken into account when producing references for future employment or re-employment.
- Reasons for leaving information gathered from the **Leavers Questionnaire** will inform future measures to address workforce plan issues. Managers will be responsible for addressing the issues that emerge from the process, with advice and support from other relevant services where required.
- The overall purpose of the Managing Leavers procedure is to help ensure that any key knowledge is retained and that the existing employee leaves on positive terms and that any improvements that could be implemented for the new replacement can be identified.

SECTION 3: THE PROCEDURE

The following **three steps** should be followed upon the receipt of an employee's resignation:

Step 1: Receive Employee's Resignation

Step 2: Issue Knowledge Capture and Leaver Questionnaires

Step 3: Actions and Monitoring

Step 1: Receive Employee's Resignation

▫ **Informal Discussion**

Where an employee informs the line manager of their intention to leave, the line manager should arrange to have an informal and private discussion as soon as practicable in order to find out the main reasons for the employee's decision.

▫ **Exploring Reasons for Leaving**

The line manager should explore the reason(s) that have prompted the employee's decision to leave. If the employee is committed to leaving the line manager should refer to **Step 2** below.

Step 2: Issue Knowledge Capture and Leaver Questionnaires

- Once the employee has confirmed their decision to leave, the line manager should issue a written acknowledgement of receipt of the resignation. At the same time the line manager will inform AskHR using the leavers' form who will issue the employee either electronically or manually with a **Knowledge Capture Questionnaire**. The employee will be required to complete this questionnaire and where it is completed manually, return it to their line manager (or nominated officer). If completed online, the manager will receive notification of completion by e-mail. The employee will also be issued with a **Leaver's Questionnaire** that will provide the employee with an opportunity to express their views on the Council and their reasons for leaving. Paper-based copies of the Leavers questionnaire must be returned to AskHR.
- Once both questionnaires are completed and the online systems are updated all employees leaving the Council can be given the opportunity to participate in a meeting with their managers to discuss the individual's departure and if required, any issues arising from this process. This is an optional stage of the procedure.

Step 3: Actions and Monitoring

▫ Management Actions

Once the online **Knowledge Capture Record** has been input or updated and both the employee and the manager are happy with the final record it should be signed off by the employee's line manager. Managers should use the information within the completed questionnaire to manage continuity, minimise disruption and periods of time lost when posts are left vacant. Indeed, managers are encouraged to utilise the details submitted by the leaver and share with any individuals temporarily covering the post or successors to the post.

Where an employee has also discussed their reasons for leaving, the manager may consider the responses given and identify any actions, which require to be taken forward.

▫ Evaluation and Monitoring

Human Resources will analyse the information contained in the Leavers Questionnaire on a quarterly basis and will report findings in an anonymous format to each Service Management Team. This is with a view to identifying factors influencing reasons for leaving and other information, which could be used to inform and develop corporate HR strategy, workforce planning and other policies and procedure across the Council. The report will also contain details of management actions taken/proposed.

The above information including the findings from the knowledge capture questionnaire will be collated to produce an annual report. This report will be submitted to the Committee Bulletin for information purposes.

SECTION 4: REVIEW OF THE PROCEDURE

Human Resources will review this procedure every three years. The procedure will, nevertheless, be subject to continual review and amendment in the light of experience of its operation, employment best practice and statutory requirements. Changes will only be put into effect following the normal consultation arrangements.

Appendix B - Managing Leavers - Knowledge Capture Questions

Section 1 – General Information

1. What are the role's main activities?
2. What is the most important knowledge in your current role which is not commonly known by team members?
3. What took you the most time to learn?

Section 2 – Documentation

4. List the resources (i.e. documents, files, books, databases, systems, websites etc) that are key to getting the job done. Please also state where they are currently stored.

| <i>Document</i> | <i>Location</i> |
|-----------------|-----------------|
|-----------------|-----------------|
5. Are there written instructions for the processes used in your job? If yes, please state which processes are documented and where these are located.

Section 3 – Useful Contacts

6. Who are your key internal contacts when carrying out this role and for whom you are the main/only contact in your team?

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Service</i> | <i>Purpose</i> |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
|-------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
7. Who are your main contacts external to the Council when carrying out your role?

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Service</i> | <i>Purpose</i> |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
|-------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|

Section 4 – Ongoing Activities

8. Specify the most important activities or projects you are currently working on that needs to be continued by someone when you leave (please include completion dates and colleagues).
9. What other outstanding issues should be considered?

Section 5 – Lessons Learned

10. What advice would you give to others who are new to this role?
11. What information might be useful for others to know?

Appendix C - Managing Leavers – Leaver’s Questionnaire

Introduction

Aberdeen City Council is committed to ensuring, as far as possible, that skilled and valuable employees are retained. Your reasons for leaving, views and insights into workplace issues are therefore vital to improve service delivery and address critical recruitment and retention issues.

Please complete the questionnaire if you are leaving your current job because:

- you resigned
- your fixed-term contract is coming to an end
- you are retiring
- you have been made redundant (voluntary or compulsory), or
- you have a new post within the Council

Your responses will be treated in confidence and only viewed by specified individuals within the HR Service. We will analyse the responses to gain a better understanding of the reasons people move jobs or leave employment with the Council.

Demographic Information

Please indicate your:

1. Job Title

2. Level of Responsibility

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Employee | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Line Manager/Supervisor/Team Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Service Manager (3 rd tier) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Head of Service | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Director | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If other please specify | |

3. Directorate

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Corporate Governance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Education, Culture and Sport | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Housing and Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Care and Wellbeing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Office of the Chief Executive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If other please specify | |

4. Service

5. Length of Service

- | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Less than 6 months | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 – 15 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 months to a year | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 – 20 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1 - 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20 – 30 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 – 5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 30 – 40 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 – 10 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 40 years and above | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. Age

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 16 – 19 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 45 – 50 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20 – 24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 50 – 54 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25 – 29 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 55 – 59 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30 – 34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 60 – 64 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35 – 39 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 65 – 69 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 40 – 44 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | 70 years and over | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Reason for Leaving

7. What are the main reasons for leaving your current role? (Please select all that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Career Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> | Commuter | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pay | <input type="checkbox"/> | Retirement | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Further Education | <input type="checkbox"/> | Redundancy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of Training Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> | Working Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| End of Fixed Term Contract | <input type="checkbox"/> | Terms and Conditions | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health Reasons | <input type="checkbox"/> | Work Colleagues | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Home Relocation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Caring Responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | Discrimination | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Not returning after Maternity Leave | <input type="checkbox"/> | Harassment or Bullying | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

If other please specify

8. What were the best and worst aspects of the job? (Please select the most relevant option for each statement)

| | Best Aspect | Worst Aspect | Not Applicable |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Colleagues | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Manager/Supervisor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Working for the Council | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Terms and Conditions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Flexible Working Options | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Job Satisfaction | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If other please specify

9. If you are leaving for another job external to the Council, what type of organisation will you be working for?

- Local Authority
- Private Sector Organisation
- Voluntary/Charity Organisation
- Further/Higher Education Institute
- Other Public Sector Organisation
- Not Applicable
- Other

If other please specify

10. Would you recommend this Council to others as a good place to work?

- Yes
- No

11. Would you consider returning to work in the Council in the future?

- Yes
- No

Experience

The following section is designed to help us understand the factors that have influenced your decision to leave your current job. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements where **1 is strongly agree and 4 is strongly disagree.**

12. Your Job

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| The job was challenging | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My skills were used effectively | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The workload was reasonable | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sufficient resources were available | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roles and responsibilities were clearly defined | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What improvements do you think can be made to the job?

13. Your Line Manager/Supervisor

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Provides constructive feedback/advice/instruction | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ensures communication channels are in place | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Encourages team to be customer focused | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Demonstrates honest and integrity in their actions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is a role model for professionalism | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is fair and consistent in his/her approach | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Recognises the effort and commitment of others | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please state below any other comments or suggestions you may have.

14. Your Team

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Morale was high | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communication was good | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The team was adequately staffed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please state any additional comments you may have regarding your job.

15. Training and Development

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Access to relevant training was available | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Training was offered to explore other options | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The induction process was informative & effective | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Expectations to advance are made clear | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please suggest below any improvements that should be made to training and developments.

16. Your Working Conditions

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| The relevant pay was offered | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Flexible working arrangements are considered | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Holiday entitlement is attractive | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A range of attractive benefits are available | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please indicate below any improvements you would like to see in relation to working conditions.

Additional Comments

17. Please state below any other information that you feel would help us better understand your reasons for leaving.

Thank you for completing the leaver's questionnaire. If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised prior to your departure please contact your line manager to arrange a suitable date and time to meet.

Appendix D – Managing Leavers - Flowchart

