

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CORPORATE SUB-COMMITTEE OF POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19th NOVEMBER 2002

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend the introduction of an Employee Recognition Policy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Employee Recognition is considered to make a positive contribution to an organisation's approach to managing its people. Recognizing and applauding an employee's contribution is critical to reinforcing employee morale. Without some expression of appreciation, employees' enthusiasm and hard work required for further improvement is likely to diminish.

Someone who is commended for an achievement usually responds by producing even better results. Ultimately, the employer can expect that the result will translate into enhanced service delivery, efficiency savings, quality improvements and strengthened public relationships.

- 2.2 Members will recall from previous reports that as part of the Employee Satisfaction survey ran as part of the Council's Work-Life Balance project employees fed back that whilst they considered the Council recognised collective and Council-wide achievements it needed to develop its recognition of employees' contributions.
- 2.3 Employee Recognition was subsequently considered by the Local Government Employees and Craftpersons' JCC which has supported and given guidance on the preferred contents of an Employee Recognition Policy. A Joint Working Party was formed involving trade union representatives and managers representing all functions across the Council, including Teachers. The Working Party worked very positively and reached early agreement on the desired content and objectives of an Early Recognition scheme allowing the attached policy document to be prepared relatively quickly and returned to this Sub-Committee for consideration.

3. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION POLICY

- 3.1 In the process of its work the Joint Working Party agreed that the Policy document should have the following objectives:-
- allow every employee to realise that their contributions are noticed and acknowledged.
 - encourage individual employees and groups of employees.
 - promote the value of our employees.

- create an environment where continuous improvement is the norm.
- improve morale and the working atmosphere for the individual or team.
- build confidence in management and employees and between management and employees.

3.2 The attached Employee Recognition Policy document has been developed and agreed by the Joint Working Party and is referred for approval to the Sub-Committee.

3.3 In summary, the policy document under a themed heading of “Your contribution counts!” promotes employee recognition as being part of the Council's culture. The Joint Working party were very keen to promote this message and to establish a very simple model that became part of everyday behaviour rather than recognition being something to be applied solely on special occasions.

3.4 More specifically, the policy clarifies the Council's process for recognising long service; encourages open communications and early recognition of employees' contributions; promotes the publicity of employee success; introduces the concept of an Employee Suggestion scheme to encourage employees' contribution to service improvement and promotes training and development opportunities as a way of recognising employees.

3.5 The policy will be communicated to all managers within the Council and a Leaflet has been drafted for distribution to all employees.

4. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The introduction of an Employee Recognition policy would be a positive addition to the Council's employment policies.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The introduction of the Employee Recognition Scheme will be contained within existing resources. The content is considered to represent what members would expect in the way of employee recognition. Many examples of good practice in employee recognition already exist within the Council and the policy document will bring some consistency without increasing expenditure.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Sub-Committee is asked to recommend to Council approval of the introduction of the attached Employee Recognition Policy.

Fiona Lees
Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

4 November 2002

FL/GH/RRS

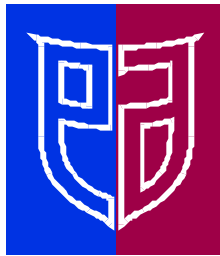
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Anyone wishing further information on this report should contact Graham Haugh, Head of Personnel Services (telephone 01563 576092).

YOUR CONTRIBUTION COUNTS

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION



East Ayrshire
COUNCIL

November 2002

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

YOUR CONTRIBUTION COUNTS...

The Council recognises that its employees are its most important resource.

The Council is therefore aware of the benefits to be gained from formally recognising employees as well as the efforts of employees who have done something out of the ordinary or gone the extra mile for the organisation. This involves recognising an action or a particular achievement which reflects the organisation's values, or demonstrates a model behaviour which others can learn from. Employees are believed to value recognition as a visible sign that their commitment to the employer is being noticed and acknowledged.

Recognition is an ongoing activity for people to express their appreciation of each other's value and contribution. It is able to work both in a top-down and bottom-up manner within the Council. Thus the initiatives outlined in this document can be applied from managers recognising the work of their employees but also by employees who may want to recognise the support of their manager or the Council as their employer.

Your contribution counts ...

The objectives of the Council's Recognition Scheme are to promote excellence within the Council by:

- allowing every employee to realise that their contributions are noticed and acknowledged
- encouraging individual employees and groups of employees
- promoting the value of our employees
- creating an environment where continuous improvement is the norm
- improving morale and the working atmosphere for the individual or team
- building confidence in management and employees and between management and employees

It is envisaged that the introduction of this Scheme will provide a framework for recognising the achievements of those who contribute to the success of the Council and encourage their continued commitment to East Ayrshire Council. **The scheme will help maintain a culture whereby employees can voice their opinions and also be thanked for their achievements.**

This scheme has been developed jointly by the Council and its Trade Unions. Both parties recognise that its success is dependant upon participation by elected members, managers and employees alike. **The scheme will be continually reviewed with a view to building on its introduction and in line with its ideas section all employees are encouraged to promote recognition ideas.**

In support of these objectives ...

The Council wants employee recognition to be:

- Part of our culture
- Personal, sincere and natural
- Specific
- Open and honest
- Accurate
- Timely
- Straight forward

Contributions count in ...

A RECOGNITION CULTURE

Thank-you !

This common courtesy is often over looked in the workplace and yet it has the potential to make a huge difference to an individual and our working environment.

The reasons for saying thank-you could include:

- completing a piece of work which has been particularly challenging or in which an employee has performed particularly well,

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- where exceptional effort has been put in by an employee or team to deal with a particular one off problem, or
 - where an employee/team has displayed a flexible approach to their work and the requirements made of them.

All managers and employees are encouraged to build 'Thank-You' into their behaviour. The "thank you" either verbally or in the form of a letter /certificate will be presented to the individual/team concerned by the person who wishes to thank them, be it a line manager to his/her employee or vice versa.

Walk the Talk !

The development of this concept could change the culture within East Ayrshire Council and help to improve the channels of communication.

“Walk the talk” involves:

- managers taking the time to stop and speak to employees
- employees feeling that their managers recognise the contribution they make to the Council
- managers building up relationships and listening to employees as well as making themselves approachable
- employees feeling valued through this social interaction with managers
- active listening

Publicise !

The Council will use of its internal publications 'Eastwords' and 'Headlines' to recognise the achievements of employees.

Line Managers and employees are encouraged to publicise employee successes through the internal publications available. The communication of success stories at departmental committees is also encouraged

Employee Ideas !

Playing your role!

A key part to this is hearing your suggestions. Employee Suggestions Schemes encourage employees to voice their own ideas.

The Council operates a policy of continuous improvement and recognises that employees are closest to working practices and are the best people to review them. The Employee Suggestion Scheme invites employees to put forward suggestions to improve a process or situation in a way that would improve service delivery, employment conditions or health and safety and ultimately reduce costs or save time.

The suggestion scheme is a useful way of channelling ideas from all levels of the workforce, and gives employees a chance to be part of the business problem-solving and decision-making process and to be recognised and rewarded for their efforts.

How your contribution is recognised...

How we will recognise

East Ayrshire Council values loyalty and commitment from employees.

Recognition on Retirement

The Council already has a policy to recognise long service on retirement. The Provost hosts a lunch for employees who retire from the Council (on any grounds) with 20 or more years service to local government. Retiring employees receive a framed certificate confirming employment service, and a gift. In addition arrangements are normally made by managers and other colleagues at service department level (in the traditional way) to recognise the retiral.

Service Recognition

Service to local government will be recognised at 20 years and at 5 yearly intervals thereafter for employees who are still in service with the Council. This will involve the presentation of a certificate by a Senior Manager in the employee's department. In addition, an informal meeting with the Director of

the Department/Head of Service will acknowledge the employee's valued contribution to both local government and East Ayrshire Council.

Employee Development

Providing personal development opportunities is also an effective form of employers recognising employees. This can take various forms and can include:

1. Training and development opportunities are readily available to Council employees. The Council considers training to be a form of recognition.

Opportunities for personal development and training and the chance for employees to attend relevant courses is an important recognition mechanism. Training can boost employee morale as well as helping the Council to develop its employees. The Council's Personal Development Reviews, e.g. EAGER for Local Government Employees provide a forum not only to discuss training needs and career aspirations but also provides a meaningful discussion for a manager and employee to recognise achievement and suggest improvement opportunities. However, it should be remembered that training should not merely be confined to those needs identified at these reviews, and that employee development needs, particularly in relation to Continuous Professional Development should be considered continuously throughout the year.

2. Invitations – Inviting employees to attend meetings or social events with senior employees is a good form of recognition.

Managers should also encourage employees to get involved in special projects, task teams, liaison visits etc. where they feel this may provide an appropriate development opportunity for the employee. Such events:

- recognise employees as having the ability to add value beyond that expected within their existing remit
- recognise and rewards excellence and positive attitudes
- encourage people to find out more about what is happening in the organisation
- encourage partnership between individuals and groups