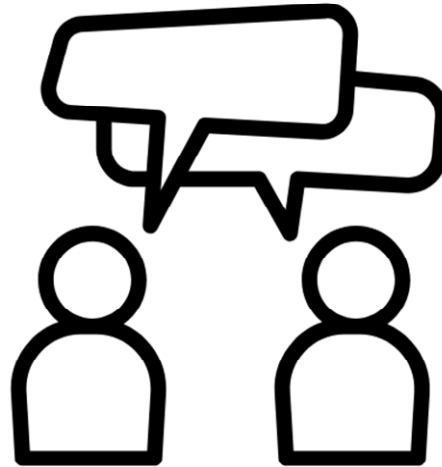


Good Conversations

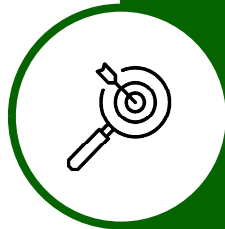


Create an Inspiring Culture



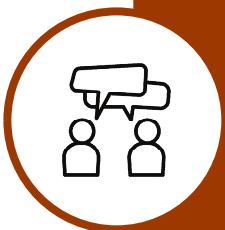
What are Good Conversations?

It is about a line manager having regular conversations with their employee(s) which focus on clarifying work related priorities for the year ahead, providing feedback and agreeing any support or development needed for employees and teams to be the best they can be. The ethos is all employees have the opportunity of talking about their job and the process should be adapted to make that happen in the most appropriate manner.



The purpose of Good Conversations

The purpose is to enable meaningful conversations which help build relationships, provide support and keep individuals feeling valued, motivated and engaged. They should help boost confidence and morale as well as help produce high performing individuals and teams. High performance and successfully delivering outcomes is achieved when managers consider the task, individuals and the team.



Good Conversation – What is it?

It is a relaxed but focussed conversation between the line manager and their employees / teams to discuss their progress and how they can be the best they can be at work.

There will be 3 parts of the conversation:

- Annual conversation
- Regular 1-2-1 check-ins
- Team check-ins

Good Conversations – What is involved?

Annual Conversation

Every employee will attend an annual conversation which will centre around 3 areas for discussion with the focus being on having a conversation and not about filling in a form or sitting around a computer.

It is a chance to step back and take stock by reflecting on the year that's been and what has been accomplished and to get prepared for the year ahead.

The 3 areas for discussion are:

**What has gone well over
the last year?**

**What might have gone
even better?**

**What do you want to
achieve / focus on for
the year(s) ahead?**

Supporting Questions for the Annual Conversation

Below is a list of supporting questions which can be used to aid conversations during the annual review between manager and employee.

What has gone well in the last year?

- What do you feel the most proud of in the last 12 months?
- What have you enjoyed working on most over the last year?
- What sense of achievement did you gain in the last year?
- Did you feel your achievement was recognised?

What might have gone even better?

- What has been challenging or had you feeling out of your comfort zone?
- What have you taken or learned from this experience?
- What support could help you achieve your goals easier?

What do you want to achieve / focus on for the year(s) ahead?

- What do you think your priorities should be?
- What is your plan for achieving these priorities?
- What barriers / challenges might get in the way of achieving these priorities?
- What are your thoughts on the best way to overcome these barriers / challenges?
- How can I help you? What other support do you need?
- How are you hoping to develop in the next 12 months?
- Where do you see your career in the future?

Annual Conversation Form – See Appendix 1 for editable version

(Record brief bullet points only - priorities can be short and long term)

Employee Name		Employee Number:	
Job Title:		Date:	
What's gone well this year? (Achievements)	What might have gone even better this year? (Barriers)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text		
Commitments (What do you want to achieve / focus on in the future?)			
What do you want to focus on for the year ahead (Your Priorities)?	What do you need to support this (Personal Development)?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text• Enter text		

Regular 1-2-1 Check-ins

In addition to the annual conversation, it is best practice that managers carry out regular 1-2-1 check-ins with their employees throughout the year covering specific topics. The topics covered below are the typical conversations that managers should be having with their employees. Research illustrates that regular good conversations lead to more productive and motivated team members.

These are conversations that can easily be incorporated into scheduled supervision or 1-2-1 meetings or simply be standalone quick check-ins in their own right. The frequency of check-ins and which topics should be discussed is entirely flexible and up to each manager and employee to discuss and agree. It is best practice to hold more regular 1-2-1 check-ins with employees you don't see as often.



Values

This topic focuses on the role modelling of the values. Using a coaching style work through the values with the employee finding out where they think they model the values and where they struggle to model the values.



Life and wellbeing

This topic will focus on both the employees' health and wellbeing. It should cover areas like resilience and dealing with change. The conversation should discuss anything that you as their manager can do to support them in the workplace, including workplace adjustments.



Ongoing Priorities

Review of the workload priorities discussed during the annual conversation. This conversation should happen regularly throughout the year.



Personal development

This topic should cover any development that was planned and any future development needs that have been identified.



Improvements

This topic focusses on what the employee thinks about improvements that can be made within the team or service.



Feedback

This conversation and all the conversations within this process should be focussing on the employee's strengths and building on these. The manager should start the conversation by asking the employee what they believe their main strengths are and then present their views on the employee's main strengths. If there are areas of concern with the employee's performance feedback should be given. More regular 1-2-1's would be expected where performance was an issue.

Supporting Questions for the 1-2-1 Check-Ins



Council Values

- How well do you think you role model the values?
- What value do you find easiest to role model?
- Which value challenges you when role modelling it?
- What can I do to support you role model the values?



Life and Wellbeing

- How do you feel about your work / life balance?
- What worries or concerns do you have right now?
- How resilient do you feel at present?
- What impact are your working arrangements having on your wellbeing?
- What is important to you in the next few years?



Priorities

- Progression on priorities linked to delivery of Council Plan, Service Plan and Team Plan?
- Which priorities are you able to progress the best?
- Do you have priorities that you are concerned might not be met?
- How do you think you could meet those priorities?
- What support do you need to meet those priorities?



Personal Development

- Have you organised or completed any of your agreed development needs?
- What did you find most useful?
- What might be an area of development that might help you further in your job?



Improvements

- What, if any, improvements to your job have you identified since we last met?
- What impact would the suggested improvements make?
- What organisational improvements would you like to see implemented?



Feedback

- What has been your biggest achievement so far this year?
- What has been your biggest challenge so far this year?
- What feedback would you like to give me?
- Is there anything you are working on that you feel is out of your remit?

Supporting Questions for 1-2-1 Check-Ins with Senior Managers:



Priorities

In addition to the supporting questions on the previous page, the following should be discussed:

- Identify Service Risks
- Review Service Performance and Performance Indicators
- Update on budget position

1-2-1 Check-In Form – See Appendix 2 for editable version

(Existing recording processes can be used. The focus should be on the conversation)

Employee Name:		Employee Number:	
Job Title:		Date:	

 Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
 Life and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
 Progress on priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
 Personal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
 Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
 Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•

Team Check-ins

Managers should have regular check-ins which focus on ensuring the team is working well together. It is acknowledged that the frequency of team check-ins will vary across the Council; however, a minimum of 2 check-ins per year should take place. The following are suggested topics that can be used for team check-in conversations. (If you already hold regular team meetings then please continue to do so just ensure you cover certain topics like Council Values.)

Suggested topics for Team Check-ins:

The Council Plan

This allows a conversation to take place about what is happening across the Council and within your Service regarding the Council Plan and current projects and workstreams.

Employee Engagement

Employees will participate in a regular staff survey and this conversation allows managers to communicate the findings from the survey.

Celebrating Achievements

This is an opportunity to celebrate what the team are doing well, where they have gone the extra mile and reflect on the impact the team is having.

Current Performance

This is an opportunity for the team to review their performance against actions plans and targets.

Challenges and Ideas

Gives the team the opportunity to discuss the challenges and the tensions the team are facing. It is a chance to explore solutions and ways forward and ways of supporting each other.

Team Learning

A chance to share what we have learned; from events we have attended, articles we have read or what we have learned on the job.



**Good
Conversations
Cycle**

Schedule an annual conversation each year at a time that suits the best needs of the service.
The annual conversation is dual purpose as it allows the manager and the employee the opportunity to participate in a good conversation.

Good conversations should take place discussing achievements, providing feedback, identifying areas for development, and clarifying priorities for the following year.

Plan and organise any agreed development.

Hold team check-in at a time that suits the needs of the service best.

Schedule and hold regular 1-1 check-ins and continue to monitor progress.

Organise ongoing team check-ins and continue to monitor progress.