Cefnogi Gweithredu Gwirfoddol yn Rhondda Cynon Tâf
Rhif Elusen Cofrestredig: 1069044

Supporting Voluntary Action in Rhondda Cynon Taff
Registered Charity No: 1069044

Staff Development Policy and Procedures

STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Definitions

Peer Support and Supervision – regular meetings between peer support officer and staff member which, as well as sharing information and task setting, include forward planning, problem solving, sharing ideas, evaluation of work against action plan objectives and professional development - within a supportive climate.

Action planning and annual review – a yearly session between line manager and staff member that allows a more comprehensive review of the past year's work and action planning for the year ahead. It is also an opportunity to look at job descriptions.

Staff development - a negotiated process for an individual where planned staff development activities are identified, carried out, and reviewed. The key purpose of such activities is to meet learning goals for individuals that will develop their work related competencies within a framework that is personally supportive and mutually beneficial to individual and organisation.

Training – the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes appropriate for carrying out a particular task or activity. (Training is one of a number of staff development methods).

Personal Development Plan – an on-going record of a staff member's identified learning needs and activities taken up to meet those needs, which is agreed by staff members and their line manager and reviewed in peer support sessions.

Peer Support Officer (PSO) - is the person who provides ongoing support and supervision to a staff member. The PSO undertakes a coaching role to help staff members to review their action plans, the progress made against set objectives, prioritise workloads and work through issues or barriers. The PSOs help staff members to identify personal development, training and resource needs. PSOs do not authorise annual leave or time off in lieu or deal with grievance and disciplinary issues. PSOs are able to take issues/requests up with Support Services Manager on behalf of staff members.

Line Manager – is the person to whom any staff member reports, in the direct management chain. At annual appraisal meetings, line managers work with staff members to develop individual action plans, which are monitored quarterly at supervision meetings. Individual and team action plans fit within Interlink's overarching annual action plan, which is in line with its Strategic Plan. Line managers authorise annual leave and time off in lieu and deal with grievance and disciplinary issues. Staff members should bring grievances direct to their line manager.

The Investors in people Standard provides:

- A structured framework for the continuous improvement of both the organisation and the paid staff, volunteers and trustees.
- A planned approach for setting and communicating the organisation's goals and developing the paid staff, volunteers and trustees to achieve those goals through training and development programmes.

2. Aims of Staff Development

For Interlink, the purposes of staff development are:

- improving the effectiveness of the organisation in meeting its aims.
- Improving the effectiveness of individuals in their current jobs.
- Facilitating change.
- Promoting high standards and good practice.

As a result of staff development Interlink will:

- better achieve its aims.
- have staff who will be better equipped to do their jobs.
- have higher staff morale and motivation.
- more efficiently use its resources.

3. Who is Staff Development for?

Much of the work of Interlink is about developing people. If we develop in our own staff the skills to identify and meet their own learning needs, as well as those groups and individuals with whom they work, all our staff will be better equipped to fulfil the organisation's aims and objectives.

The volunteer members of the Executive Committee of Interlink have an entitlement to opportunities to become skilled and knowledgeable trustees of the organisation. A staff development policy, therefore, must also embrace their needs.

Interlink has a Volunteer Policy which outlines the nature of our commitment to our volunteers. They, too, have an entitlement to learning opportunities through a Staff Development Policy and an entitlement to support and supervision from an authorised member of staff so that their work may be more effective.

4. Who is Responsible for Staff Development?

The development of individuals within Interlink is the responsibility of line managers and is explicit in their job descriptions. The Management Team has a responsibility to ensure appropriate structures exist for that to happen.

The key responsibilities of the management group are:

- to manage the implementation of the staff development policy.
- to identify staff development issues and to recommend priorities.
- to identify appropriate processes for internal policy consultation and identify any training implications of implementing new policies.
- to implement an agreed training strategy that results from an identification of the needs of individuals and of the team.
- to co-ordinate the dissemination of information on opportunities available for individuals and for the team.
- to monitor the effectiveness of the staff development policy.

5. Organisation of Staff Development

All staff will receive an effective induction, regular support and supervision sessions with an appointed peer support officer and an annual review with their line manager - as outlined in the procedures accompanying this policy.

6. Resources

Interlink recognises that, to be effective, this policy must be adequately resourced but that this may be constrained by the overall funding the organisation receives.

Interlink, as part of the resourcing of staff development, will actively pursue additional resources to meet particular individual, group and organisational learning and development needs to complement what it can provide from its existing resources.

Resources will be allocated according to the need of the individual. There will be an entitlement to support but within the limits of the overall staff development budget.

A staff development budget may cover some of the following types of activity:

Training courses
Conferences, seminars, workshops
Exchanges, project visits etc

Staff ‘away days’
Research
Non Managerial supervision
Buddying and mentoring
Skill sharing
Executive Committee Training
Briefings
Staff volunteering
Work shadowing [internal and external]

Any activity suggested for resourcing under staff development will be judged primarily against the extent to which it will enhance effectiveness and performance of individuals in their current job. However, consideration will be given to appropriate training and development opportunities for staff moving into new positions within Interlink and for staff leaving Interlink, as part of an exit strategy.

7. Monitoring

Monitoring of the operation of the Staff Development Policy will be undertaken by the Management Team and reported quarterly to the Finance and Personnel Sub Committee.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

1. ORGANISATION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Responsibility for development of staff is written into the job description of all line managers, and the discussion of staff development policy is part of induction for all staff.
- All staff members are provided with a Staff Handbook.
- All new staff members have a planned induction:
    - The line manager provides a general introduction to Interlink.
    - The line manager oversees the induction process into the particular post, with support from the rest of the management team and other staff members.
    - Staff who are not new to the organisation, but are changing jobs within it, also have a planned period of induction into their new role
- All staff in the organisation will have regular support and supervision sessions with an appointed peer support officer, a key component of which will be identifying staff development needs, planning the meeting of those needs, and reviewing previous development opportunities. Support and supervision meetings will be given adequate time, privacy and a have a shared agenda.
- A standard pro-forma is used for the recording of support and supervision sessions.
- Peer support officers will meet regularly to discuss shared issues and to ensure standardisation of the support and supervision process.
- All staff will have an annual review with their line manager to discuss their annual action plan, to look at goals that were set for the previous year, reviews achievements and set new targets. It will also be an opportunity to review the support and supervision arrangements. That is, staff members should have the opportunity to comment on the support given over the year by their peer support officer.
- All staff members will have a Personal Development Plan (PDP), which is agreed by staff member and line manager, identifies learning goals, and identifies ways in which these have been or will be met. This will be updated and referred to during support and supervision, but must form a component of annual review.
- The Management Team will oversee expenditure on staff development and report quarterly to the Finance and Personnel Committee.

2. INDUCTION

Main Aims

By the end of the induction process new employees will:

- Have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and role in their own workplace, which will enable them to fulfil their job description.
- Have negotiated an agreement for regular support and supervision with their peer support officer.
- Be able to relate their own work, and that of their immediate colleagues to the overall aims and structure of Interlink.
- Have an understanding of the work of Interlink, which clarifies the role they play in the organisation.
- Have established contacts with relevant people within and outside Interlink appropriate to their job.

Principles

The following principles will apply in all inductions:

- Induction is a person-centred process; it should primarily reflect the needs of the new employee, whilst recognising the need to clarify organisational expectations.
- With the exception of the first week, the pace, content and sequence of the induction process should be negotiated between the new employee and their line manager.
- The process should include regular reviews.
- The line manager and new employee are jointly responsible for induction.
- The way in which induction is carried out should serve as a model for later working practice. For example, the principles of negotiation, joint responsibility and evaluation should be carried forward into teamwork, support, supervision and staff development.

Responsibility

Induction is the overall responsibility of the new recruit's line manager. The line manager is responsible for the preparatory work necessary before the induction process begins; for planning the first week of induction and for ensuring that the planned induction is completed. Planning the induction process after the first week is viewed as a joint task of the employee and the line manager.

Process

Induction will normally follow a sequence, which leads the new member of staff from an understanding of their job; how it relates to the work of colleagues; how it relates to the community in Rhondda Cynon Taff through to the wider regional and national perspectives and programmes in Wales.

Part of this process will be familiarisation with Interlink's practice and procedures. This should include discussion about support and supervision and annual review.

Induction programmes will reflect the sequence outlined above. Programmes will enable new recruits to settle into their work place as comfortably as possible. They will also build on the new staff member's increasing understanding of their role in the organisation.

Timescale

No firm rules can be given for the length of an induction process. The variability will depend upon the individual as well as other factors including:

- Whether the post is full time or part time.
- The complexity of the job.
- The previous experience of the new recruit.
- Time pressures on colleagues.

In general, by the end of the 4^{th} week of employment the main aims of induction should have been achieved to the satisfaction of the new staff member and the line manager.

Format

The first week of an induction programme is pre-planned by the line manager. A general plan for the rest of the induction will be negotiated with agreed timescales, by the new member of staff and the line manager at the end of the first week.

The induction programme will be reviewed regularly, preferably each week, but not less than fortnightly. The induction checklist and the list of aims from this document will be used for these meetings.

Agreement on arrangements for support and supervision will be part of the early stages of induction. The first review will take place at the end of the six- month probationary period.

3. SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Main Aims

Support and Supervision aims to:

- ensure that the operations of each project or piece of work are consistent with the primary functions of the organisation.
- ensure that workers are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- develop a suitable climate and satisfactory conditions for practice.
- reduce the stresses which are likely to impair effective performance.
- assist personal development in the professional context.

Principles

- Supervision is a two-way process. It should meet the supervisor's needs to oversee the direction and quality of the work and the staff member's need for feedback and support.
- It should take place at regular intervals within an agreed time slot, and without interruptions.
- It should be regarded as a priority booking by both participants, and only changed in exceptional circumstances.
- The climate of support and supervision should be one of shared responsibility for success and failure. Staff members need support with problem solving to meet unachieved objectives, within an understanding that personal performance is closely related to adequate support and resources.

Responsibility

Support and supervision is a joint responsibility between staff member and peer support officer. Key areas of responsibility are setting the agenda and recording outcomes and agreements. Setting the agenda is a joint task. Who records the meetings can be negotiated between staff member and peer support officer, as is the content of the notes in terms of confidentiality. The meeting notes are signed by both staff member and peer support officer and both retain a copy. Issues and requests arising from staff members are discussed between peer support officers and the Support Services Manager. The notes of peer support meetings are useful for annual review sessions between staff members and line managers.

Process

A support and supervision session will normally follow a sequence of review and feedback on achievements since the last session, identifying and agreeing short term actions within a framework of longer term action planning, identifying the resources required to realise objectives, and agreeing a process for meeting resource needs. Of prime importance to the process of support and supervision is the climate of trust between peer support officer and staff member. If the climate of trust needed for effective support and supervision is breaking down both parties must inform their respective line manager. The management team will assess the situation and take the steps necessary to ensure that effective support and supervision continues to be available to the staff member.

Timescale

Support and supervision will take place at regular intervals, usually six weekly, agreed between the individual member of staff and their peer support officer. New staff and staff changing roles will require more frequent supervision.

A support and supervision session should take between 1 and 2 hours and should be uninterrupted.

Formal sessions may be complemented by ad-hoc informal sessions where the need arises from an individual's ongoing work. Staff members are also able to take issues directly to their line manager, within an open door policy.

Format

The key activities within a support and supervision session are:

- planning, monitoring and evaluation of work.
- education and development, in relation to activities since last supervision, and ongoing plans.
- support; e.g. problem solving, resource allocation, personal support.

While any framework for these activities must be flexible, it is also important that all staff have equality of opportunity for good support and supervision. Therefore, all supervision must include time for:

- review of actions from previous session.
- review of any learning goals planned at previous session.
- setting new actions and forward planning.
- identifying any new resources, learning or development needs in relation to new objectives. (This will sometimes be as simple as identifying background reading or relevant policy papers). More significant resources e.g. equipment, must be approved by the staff member's line manager.
- time for general information sharing.
- time for personal/professional support.

Interlink will provide management development training for all peer support officers and line managers in the organisation, particularly on supervision and appraisal.

4. ANNUAL STAFF REVIEW

Main Aims

- to confirm or re-clarify the agreed purpose and main aims of the job.
- to re-clarify main tasks within the framework of the organisation's annual action plan.
- to set objectives for next year in line with purpose of job and within the framework of Interlink's annual action plan.
- where necessary, to update the Job Description.
- to check performance in relation to responsibilities and objectives.
- to review support and supervision arrangements.
- to identify support, knowledge and skills needed.
- to plan a strategy to meet these needs.
- to identify future career goals and steps needed to progress them.

Principles

The principles that underpin review are consistent with the principles of support and supervision. Explicit is the belief that the forward planning of Interlink is complemented and supported by the exercise of the annual review that allows individuals to engage in personal forward planning with their line manager.

The written records of annual reviews are confidential to the staff member, the line manager, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This principle ensures that the line management function of managers, as carried out in the annual reviews, can be monitored and evaluated.

The written record must be agreed by staff member and line manager and gives the CEO a good indication of the quality of managerial relationships.

Responsibility

The responsibility for fixing the time and arrangements for a review lies with the line managers. The actual review is a two way process, and both line manager and staff member are responsible for considerable preparation, including re-reading job descriptions, and the record of the previous review. The staff member may like to offer records of support and supervision sessions to the line manger as a means of preparation for a review.

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to ensure reviews get carried out within a reasonable time-scale and that proper records are kept.

Process

Like induction and support and supervision, annual review is a person-centred process. Its main elements are review and forward planning, but there must be a climate and ethos of staff development. The demands the organisation makes on the individual must be consistent with support and learning opportunities provided to enable the individual to meet those demands. Annual review will also include a time for career planning for the staff member, a review of past career moves and a discussion of possible future choices.

Timescale

An employee will have the first review six months after appointment at the end of their probationary period, and annually from that date.

A review session will take 1.5 to 2 hours, but both manager and staff member should allow at least two hours for preparation and two hours to write up notes from the session.

Written notes will be agreed and signed within two weeks of the date of the review.

Format

The annual review will take place in a private room with no interruptions. The content mirrors that of support and supervision, but with less detail on the day to day, and more emphasis on general review and long-term planning. The content of review will also be more weighted than support and supervision on a personal development plan for the coming year, including the identification of needs, and a timescale to meet the needs.

ORGANISATIONAL ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

Interlink's annual action plan is developed each year in line with its Strategic Plan. Individual action planning is undertaken within this framework with an annual review meeting to set work objectives for the year, supplemented by shorter term planning of actions to achieve those objectives as part of the ongoing support and supervision process.

Identification of individual training needs at both annual review and in support and supervision sessions is an important part of achieving personal and organisational work objectives and the personal development plan (PDP) records these.