

Recognising and celebrating our long serving employees

The long service appreciation letter

When employees receive their long service appreciation letter signed by the Chief Executive we want to give all employees the same positive experience, so that they feel equally valued and recognised for their loyalty and commitment to public services as well as dedicating so much of their life to working within Aberdeen City Council.

The standard paragraphs in the letter are framed to formally thank the employee for their years of service and contribution. However, the part that the employee is likely to value most, is their manager's contribution where they get the opportunity to recognise the employee from their personal knowledge of what they have achieved. This is therefore a very important part of the letter.

On reviewing the personalised inserts provided by managers, the quality and consistency of the content can vary. So to ensure each individual employee is given as positive an experience as possible when they receive their letter, here is some guidance on what managers could usefully be including in their contribution to the long service appreciation letter.

The manager's insert could for example:

- explain how highly they are regarded by their colleagues/customers. For example:

"During the time we have worked together, it is obvious to me as to why the Council and your colleagues hold you in such high regard and value your contribution, always in the interests of Aberdeen City Council. During your 25/35/40 years with us you have proved to be an excellent asset for Aberdeen City Council"

- refer to specific organisational accomplishments they have achieved and the impact they have had (e.g. specific examples of improved ways of working and how services are delivered; how they have personally faced, or helped the organisation to face particular organisational challenges referring to what these were; their successful approach to problem solving, again using examples)
- acknowledge their experience, knowledge and continuing contribution (e.g. using some memorable details, include how they have personally contributed to improving the customer, staff experience and how using resources)
- how they contribute to the organisation's positive culture and environment

- how they have supported you in your role. For example:

“During my time working with you, I have come to appreciate your support not only to me in my role, but also across a span of activities, which have had and will continue to have a significant impact on the council now and in the future. I can see that this has continued to enthuse and motivate you which is great to see. This has a significant impact on your colleagues”

- how you have witnessed their development, growth and maturity during the time you have worked with them in in organisation

These are only examples of what should be included, and it not intended to be an exhaustive list. Employees will have contributed in many different ways during their time with us. Nonetheless, I’m sure you’ll agree that such recognition by their manager is likely to have a very positive impact on the recipient of this letter.