

# Implementing Annual Performance Reviews which meet the recommendation of the Winsor Report and support better Performance Management

*With a requirement for better performance management and the Winsor report recommendations now being implemented, the importance of a robust PDR process within police forces has been highlighted. Thames Valley Police (TVP) chose to adopt online performance appraisal software, Talent Performance®.*



*“We are tighter, sharper and more mobile since adopting Talent Performance®.”*

Alison Sercombe,  
People Services  
Partner – Leadership,  
Thames Valley Police

## **Challenge: meeting the changing needs of police forces and the recommendations of the Winsor Report**

An annual review process is a key part of good performance management which identifies development opportunities. Within the Winsor Report it is recommended that a performance review or PDR takes place before any incremental pay review, ensuring the individual is on track – and very few performance software systems enable this.

Thames Valley Police is committed to investment in Talent Management and has recently been highlighted for best practice with regard to managing talent in the recent PEEL (Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy programme) inspection report which looked at 42 police forces. TVP was keen to get ahead of the game and adopt a system which could not only meet the Winsor Report recommendation, but to also offer ‘anywhere, anytime’ access for its people.

## **Solution: choosing a performance system to meet the requirement of annual PDRs and provide easy-to-use reviews and in-depth management information**

As with many other performance systems, Thames Valley Police’s older software was not capable of ‘secure access anywhere’ – and could neither create the instant summary reports nor provide the range of analysis and insight that Alison Sercombe, People Services Partner – Leadership, at Thames Valley Police and the senior leadership team required. Already using the configurable Talent 360® for spotting those who have potential and development for leadership within the organisation, it chose to deploy Talent Performance®.

Both the 360 and performance modules Thames Valley Police uses are standalone systems within the Talent Cloud system, but employees access both from the same log-in home page. To Alison this is crucial.

*“It’s important to demonstrate that development planning and performance are linked and having both processes launching from the same point makes real sense to us and encourages people to see the links and interconnections between the two. This means that when an individual completes a 360, it informs his or her continuous professional development (CPD) pages on the same piece of software. As part of our emphasis on career ownership with TVP, any individual can complete his or her own CPD pages, work towards specific career aspirations, and have the appraisal form included as part of the application for advancement. The requirement for all officers to have a CPD is already firmly embedded within our organisation – and we are seeing real growth in the individual ownership of their career planning.”*



## Outcome: improved individual ownership, supported managers and access to strong management information

**Stronger management information** – The instant, real-time and accurate reports on offer within Talent Performance® enable Alison and the senior leadership team to drill down into the data to view trends and progress across the organisation. Alison comments, *“Users have found the dashboard very useful; individuals can see their own progress and what they are working on, and managers are able to check on team performance and progress. As a leadership team we’re able to see who is falling behind in their objectives.”*

**Supporting the changing role of the manager** – The relationship between managers and their team within Thames Valley Police is changing; managers are beginning to understand that their role is to manage their teams and their performance. Thames Valley Police positions their PDR process as the writing up of this relationship and not a form-filling exercise, and that the performance conversation is an on-going dialogue. Alison observes, *“We’ve found that since moving to Talent Performance, the PDR is written more thoughtfully, more concisely and is better structured – and that’s due to the fields available and the structure within the system. One of the great things about Talent Performance is the ability to customise the system for us as HR in terms of process, for the organisation in terms of language and objectives and for the individual him or herself. It’s the seemingly small things such as uploading your own photo and customising your own page that has helped us to get ownership of the system!”*

**Increased ownership of progression and promotion** - A key thread of the investment in 360 degree feedback and a more robust PDR system is the move towards a greater emphasis on individual ownership of career progression and performance. *“Introducing Talent Performance® clearly has operational and time savings, but it is also about making the shift towards greater ownership and accountability for one’s own objective achievement and career development. It’s about police officers and police staff now pulling development and opportunities towards them rather than having them pushed in their direction. Our people are beginning to understand that development isn’t about attending a training course it’s about seeking out opportunities for shadowing, being mentored or being seconded to gain experience in other areas. It’s a real cultural change.”*

**Access anywhere** - Being able to access, update and complete the review away from the station means that there is no longer a need for room bookings or additional down time to be scheduled. In the future, as police cars become Wi-Fi hotspots, Alison sees that reviews will be done on-the-job and accessed via a handheld device. Greater secure accessibility also means that partners beyond the TVP internal network can access the system securely to complete reviews.

**Improved consensus of ratings** - Thames Valley Police rates its people across 3 levels of performance and has a high degree of consensus across the ratings for any individual. *“This consensus is brought about not only because of the shared understanding and openness within the organisation about what makes for an ‘achieved’, ‘not achieved’ or ‘exceeded’ performance level, but the software facilitates arriving at the final rating.”*

### In summary

Going forward, Alison sees the review being used as a CPD record of evidence and, as tablets and smartphones become more widely used off-site, instantly updating, the PDR will become a ‘live’ account of current performance.

Alison sums up, *“Annual performance review is key to ensuring that our people are meeting and exceeding the expectations we and the public have – and for spotting our stars alongside commanders’ recommendations. But it isn’t a tick box exercise. The move to online performance review supports the digitisation and professionalization of policing and the change in how learning and performance management is delivered. We are tighter, sharper and more mobile since adopting Talent Performance®.”*

“An appraisal which doesn’t produce management information is meaningless when looking for change. We know that Talent Performance® gives our people line of sight of their own performance and signposts their development, and gives the leadership team the information needed to inform decisions.”

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