

# **HMPPS Performance Management Early Adopters**

## **Key survey findings**

**V1.2**

**OFFICIAL SENSITIVE – Management Information, for internal MoJ use**

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# 1. Key Summary

## Overview

- This report summarises findings from surveys about the new performance management process introduced at HMPPS early adopter sites.
- Two surveys were run; one at the start of implementation of the new process (to provide a baseline) and another after implementation. The initial survey had 266 complete responses and the follow-on survey had 176 complete responses. This is relatively low given the number of staff across the early adopter areas (over 2,500 staff).

## Findings

- Broadly there was no strong shift in views (either positive or negative) in questions asked in both the initial survey and the follow-on survey.
- Questions were asked in the follow-on survey about the experience of the new process, and responses from participants who reported having had a performance conversation since the launch were largely positive.

Of those who reported having had a performance conversation:

- Approximately 70% said they agreed performance expectations in the conversation.
- Around 70% agreed development goals.
- Around 85% discussed wellbeing.
- Around 70% had confidence their manager would implement actions.
- Around 60% were confident that the process would be fair.
- Around 75% were confident that their manager would follow up on their progress.

A caveat to this is the sample size of staff who reported having had conversations was small (81 people), although there may well have been more people who had conversations but who did not complete the survey.

- The proportion of follow-on survey respondents who reported having had a performance conversation since the launch was much higher in respondents based in the non-prison early adopter areas (86% of respondents reported having had a conversation) than amongst respondents based in prisons (28% of respondents reported having had a conversation). This indicates a lower occurrence of the conversations in prisons.
- Of the 95 people who responded to the follow-on survey who said they had not had a performance conversation with their line manager since the launch of the early adopter phase (87 of whom were based in prisons), the most common reason selected for why not, was: 'the performance conversation not being initiated by the line manager' (52 responses).
- Around 40% of all survey respondents said that they **never** discussed performance, development or wellbeing with their line manager.

## 2. Background

The aim of the early adopter phase was to understand how elements of the new performance management approach operate in practice within HMPPS environments. These elements included:

- Regular performance conversations – whether conversations occurred (either individually or as groups), to discuss performance expectations, development, aspirations or barriers.
- Quarterly Reviews – at least one review to take place involving the senior management of the early adopter area, to review overall performance and awards made over the previous quarter.

The early adopters phase ran from September 2021 until February 2022 and included the following business areas in order of start dates:

- Strategy, Planning and Performance (HMPPSHQ) – 20<sup>th</sup> September
- Surrey Probation Delivery Unit – 27<sup>th</sup> September
- HMP Whitemoor – 1<sup>st</sup> October
- HMP Feltham – 11<sup>th</sup> October
- HMP Erlestoke – 18<sup>th</sup> October
- Probation Workforce Programme (PSHQ) – 18<sup>th</sup> October
- HMP Full Sutton – 31<sup>st</sup> October

Two surveys were issued in each site except one (see section 3). The first survey was used to benchmark views and practices of performance management and the second survey to assess the early adopter phase itself and any changes in views or practices.

## 3. Sample sizes and caveats

The initial survey (launched 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and open for around two weeks) was intended to benchmark the current state of performance management (PM) across the early adopter sites.

The follow-up survey (launched 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and open for around two weeks) took place after the early adopters had implemented the new PM processes and was intended to look at any changes in views, and ask some specific questions relating to the PM processes and its implementation.

The sample sizes need to be considered when looking at survey results and consideration given to the uncertainty there may be on results, given differing samples and sample sizes.

The initial survey had the following number of complete responses:

Location	Number of responses
HMP Feltham	46
HMP Full Sutton	102
HMP Whitemoor	30
Probation Workforce Programme	12
Strategy, Planning and Performance	59
Surrey Probation Delivery Unit	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b>

The follow-up survey had the following number of complete responses:

Location	Number of responses
HMP Erlestoke	14
HMP Feltham	10
HMP Full Sutton	70
HMP Whitemoor	26
Probation Workforce Programme	19
Strategy, Planning and Performance	21
Surrey Probation Delivery Unit	16
Total	176

Key things to note from this are:

- The number of responses (266 and 176) is relatively low given the number of staff across the early adopter areas (over 2,500 staff). (It is worth noting that response rates are often lower in surveys conducted in prisons, where operational staff do not have access to a computer as readily as on other parts of MoJ. Paper copies of the survey were provided as an option.)
- There is a margin of error on survey results that gets smaller the larger the sample is. Given the sample sizes above, a substantial change in views would be needed in the questions asked in both surveys in order for us to conclude there has been a genuine change in views. Significance testing has been carried out and changes that were significant are highlighted later in this report.
- The distribution of responses from different business areas is not so different between the initial survey and follow-on survey (e.g. Full Sutton returned the most responses in each case, other areas had similar proportions).
- The number of responses is too small to present results by individual business area or prison, or to attempt demographic analysis.
- HMPS Erlestoke only took part in the follow-on survey.
- Incomplete (partial) survey responses were excluded from data analysis on the basis that if a member of staff had closed the survey part way through without clicking “submit” then they did not want their views to be taken into account.

## 4. Key findings amongst questions in both surveys

Please see Annexes A and B for survey scores.

From the **initial survey** (266 responses), findings were:

- **Coaching and Learning and Development (L&D):** Only around 25% to 35% of respondents agreed that their manager coaches them to support continuous learning, that investing in time to support L&D activities was given priority, and they had time to do L&D. Around 25% neither agreed nor disagreed.
- **Frequency of discussions:** Around 25% of respondents discussed *performance* and *development* needs every 8 weeks or less. Around 45% of respondents discussed *wellbeing* with their manager every 8 weeks or less.
- **Frequency of discussions:** Around 40% of respondents **never** discussed performance, development or wellbeing with their line manager.
- **View of the process:** Around 40% of respondents agreed their performance was evaluated fairly and around a third neither agreed nor disagreed.
- **Performance Feedback:** Around 40% of respondents agreed *performance* feedback they received was helpful, around 30% neither agreed nor disagreed.
- **Development Feedback:** Only around 30% of respondents agreed *development* feedback they had received was helpful, with around 35% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.
- **Wellbeing Feedback:** Around 40% of respondents agreed the wellbeing support they receive from their manager has a positive impact on their wellbeing and around 35% neither agreed nor disagreed.
- **Poor performance:** Only 20% of respondents agreed poor performance was dealt with effectively in their team, and about 40% neither agreed nor disagreed.

When **comparing to the follow-on survey**:

- There were only two questions where the percentage who agreed with a question asked in both surveys had changed by a statistically significant amount. **This indicates broadly there was no strong shift in views (positive or negative) across the questions asked in both surveys since the new PM processes were introduced.**
- The proportion of respondents who agreed with the question “My manager regularly checks in with me regarding my personal wellbeing” dropped from 53% in the initial survey to 42% in the follow-on survey. The reasons for this are unclear; it is not an expected consequence of the new PM processes and so may be a result of the follow-on survey being responded to by fewer and in some cases different people than responded to the initial survey.
- With the question on “Investing time in learning and development activities is given priority in my business area”, the agree responses dropped from 34% in the initial survey to 25% in the follow-on survey. Again, the reasons for this are unclear; it is not an expected consequence of the new PM processes.

## 5. Follow-on survey specific PM questions

The follow-on survey contained a number of questions specifically on the new PM process that are examined here.

There was a question on whether people had had a performance conversation with their manager. **The results presented here are filtered on those who indicated they had had at least one conversation.** This further reduces the sample size from 176 to just 81 people (46% of the follow-on survey respondents).

Bearing in mind, the sample size of staff who reported having conversations was small (although there may well have been more people who had conversations but who did not complete the survey), key findings are:

With questions asked in the follow-on survey about the experience of the new process, respondents who reported having had a performance conversation since the launch were **largely positive**:

- Over two thirds agreed performance expectations (68% Yes), development goals (72% Yes), and discussed wellbeing (86% Yes) as part of the process.
- Around two thirds had confidence their manager would:
  - implement actions (69% Agreed, only 6% Disagreed),
  - the process would be fair (60% agreed, only 14% disagreed),
  - and that their manager would follow up on their progress (74% agreed, only 9% disagreed).

When asked “I feel confident that I will have sufficient development time to meet my development goals” 47% agreed and 26% disagreed.

48% were informed by their manager that they intended to discuss them at quarterly review.

It is worth noting that **a much larger proportion of respondents reported having had performance conversations in the non-prison business areas than in prisons.** Of the 176 responses to the follow-on survey:

- 120 responses came from prisons. 33 responses indicated they had had a performance conversation. **So 28% of respondents based in prisons had had a performance conversation.**
- 56 responses came from the non-prison business areas. 48 responses indicated they had had a performance conversation. **So 86% of respondents from non-prison areas had had a performance conversation.**

This indicates a lower occurrence of the conversations in prisons.

Of the 95 people who responded to the follow-on survey who said they **had not had a performance conversation with their line manager since the launch of the early adopter phase** (87 of whom were based in prisons), the most common reasons selected for why not were:

- the performance conversation not being initiated by the line manager (52 responses)
- and not being aware of the new PM policy (23 responses).

# Annex A – Initial survey results

## 1st survey - Percentages

- Q1.1. My manager coaches me regularly to support my continuous learning.
- Q1.2. Investing time in learning and development activities is given priority in my Site/Area/Directorate
- Q1.3. I have sufficient time to engage in my performance and development activities.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree overall
15%	24%	25%	27%	9%	36%
19%	26%	21%	23%	10%	34%
18%	29%	26%	22%	5%	27%

- Q2.1. How often do you have a performance management discussion with your manager?
- Q2.2. How often do you discuss your development needs and/or career goals with your manager?
- Q2.3. How often do you discuss your personal wellbeing with your manager?

Weekly	Every 8 weeks (bi monthly)	Quarterly	Once every 4 months	Once every 6 months	Annually	Never	8 weeks or less
6%	21%	9%	2%	8%	16%	40%	26%
6%	18%	8%	3%	7%	15%	44%	24%
23%	21%	6%	2%	3%	7%	38%	44%

- Q3.1. I think my performance is evaluated fairly.
- Q3.2. I receive regular feedback on my performance.
- Q3.3. The feedback I receive helps me to improve my performance.
- Q3.4. I receive regular feedback on my development.
- Q3.5. The feedback I receive helps me to improve my development.
- Q3.6. My manager regularly checks in with me regarding my personal wellbeing.
- Q3.7. The support I receive has had a positive impact on my personal wellbeing.
- Q3.8. Poor performance is dealt with effectively in my team.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree overall
11%	14%	33%	34%	8%	42%
16%	32%	16%	28%	8%	36%
11%	21%	29%	30%	8%	38%
19%	35%	22%	19%	5%	24%
13%	21%	37%	22%	7%	28%
14%	15%	18%	34%	19%	53%
13%	15%	34%	25%	13%	38%
24%	19%	37%	18%	3%	20%

# Annex B – Follow-on survey results

Results for questions that were asked in both the initial survey and the follow-on survey:

## 2nd survey - Percentages

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree overall
Q1.1. My manager coaches me regularly to support my continuous learning.	22%	18%	26%	20%	15%	35%
Q1.2. Investing time in learning and development activities is given priority in my Site/Area/Directorate	22%	31%	22%	17%	8%	25%
Q1.3. I have sufficient time to engage in my performance and development activities.	20%	35%	23%	15%	6%	22%

	Weekly	Every 8 weeks (bi monthly)	Quarterly	Once every 4 months	Once every 6 months	Annually	Never	8 weeks or less
Q2.1. How often do you have a performance management discussion with your manager?	6%	20%	8%	3%	6%	12%	44%	26%
Q2.2. How often do you discuss your development needs and/or career goals with your manager?	5%	21%	10%	2%	6%	11%	46%	25%
Q2.3. How often do you discuss your personal wellbeing with your manager?	20%	20%	5%	3%	3%	5%	45%	40%

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree overall
Q11.1. I think my performance is evaluated fairly.	13%	15%	33%	28%	11%	39%
Q11.2. I receive regular feedback on my performance.	22%	24%	20%	24%	10%	34%
Q11.3. The feedback I receive helps me to improve my performance.	15%	17%	35%	19%	14%	33%
Q11.4. I receive regular feedback on my development.	25%	26%	23%	17%	9%	26%
Q11.5. The feedback I receive helps me to improve my development.	16%	20%	31%	21%	11%	32%
Q11.6. My manager regularly checks in with me regarding my personal wellbeing.	23%	21%	14%	25%	17%	42%
Q11.7. The support I receive has had a positive impact on my personal wellbeing.	20%	16%	27%	21%	15%	36%
Q11.8. Poor performance is dealt with effectively in my team.	26%	26%	33%	9%	6%	15%



**Results for questions that were asked in just the follow-on survey:**

*Please note these percentages are based on only respondents who indicated that they had had at least one performance conversation.*

- Q6. Were performance expectations agreed as part of the conversations with your line manager?
- Q7. Were development goals agreed as part of the conversations with your line manager?
- Q8. Was your wellbeing discussed as part of the conversations with your line manager?

Yes	No
68%	32%
72%	28%
86%	14%

- Q9.1. I have confidence that my manager will take away and implement actions agreed
- Q9.2. I feel confident that the performance management process will be fair.
- Q9.3. I have confidence that my manager will follow-up on my progress.
- Q9.4. I feel confident that I will have sufficient development time to meet my development goals.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1%	5%	25%	37%	32%
6%	7%	26%	41%	20%
2%	6%	17%	44%	30%
7%	19%	27%	30%	17%

Agree overall	69%
	60%
	74%
	47%

- Q10. Were you informed by your manager that they intended to discuss you at a Quarterly Review?

Yes	No
48%	52%