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Secondment Policy



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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to assist all those involved in the secondment process. It is intended to cover both internal and external secondment arrangements. It provides guidelines to ensure a consistent approach is taken across all service areas and that those concerned have an understanding of the process, prior to entering into a secondment agreement.

2. PURPOSE OF A SECONDMENT

A secondment is the planned and voluntary transfer of an individual, with the agreement of their manager, from one post to another normally for a time-limited period. The member of staff should benefit from the secondment by developing new skills, knowledge and experience. At the end of the secondment, the employee may either return to their original post, or if this is not possible due to organisational/departmental changes, to a post commensurate with their grade prior to secondment. These arrangements should be clarified prior to the commencement of the secondment.

A secondment is not an 'acting up' arrangement, although it may be to a higher graded post.

Secondments should only be utilised to cover maternity leave, long-term sickness, or temporary posts up to a 12-month period.

3. BENEFITS OF SECONDMENT

A well-managed secondment can offer benefits for all parties involved, namely the individual employee, the employee's manager, the host manager and the Council.

The Employee

- Increased motivation through experiencing a new and challenging work environment.
- Personal and career development through the acquisition of professional, managerial, technical and interpersonal skills.
- The opportunity to achieve clear and specific objectives in a time-limited period.
- The opportunity to explore a new career option, and apply specific skills in a different organisational environment.
- Gain an appreciation of other areas of the Council.

The Employee's Manager

- Increased motivation of employee on their return.
- Assisting an individual to develop their skills, knowledge and competence.
- Develop closer links with other departments within the Council, or another organisation.
- An opportunity to develop other staff – succession planning.

The Host Manager

- The benefit of an employee for a time-limited period, which may not otherwise be available.
- The ability to utilise an individual's particular skills for a project or specific piece of work.
- Introduction of new ideas and approaches to the department or team.
- Develop closer links with other departments within the Council or another organisation.

4. IDENTIFYING SECONDMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Secondments can be identified in the following ways:

- Through the Personal Development Plan process, which identifies career/personal development needs.
- Through secondment opportunities which are advertised within the Council, or made known to an appropriate group of staff.
- In partnership with other organisations in order to progress joint strategies or programmes of work.

Care needs to be taken to ensure equality of opportunity for all potential applicants. This applies particularly where there is a promotional secondment, or the secondment is likely to be of a long duration i.e. more than 12 months.

5. APPROVAL

Prior to any application for a secondment the individual must gain approval from their manager. The employee should clearly state the reasons for applying for the secondment, including the potential benefits to themselves and the Council (see attached form).

The seconding manager will consider both the needs of the individual and the service as a whole and ensure the equitable treatment of all potential secondees.

If the request to 'second' is rejected the manager will explain to the individual the reason(s) for the refusal. If an individual is aggrieved by this, then they may use the grievance procedure.

Where clear potential benefits have been identified every effort should be made to allow staff to pursue a secondment, however the decision must be made in the light of the need to maintain service needs, organisational stability and effectiveness.

6. PREPARATION FOR THE SECONDMENT

To achieve a successful secondment there needs to be preparation by all parties. The following should therefore be considered:

- A clear understanding of the purpose of the secondment. A job description should therefore be produced which outlines the roles and responsibilities, together with a person specification.
- The employee's terms and conditions during the secondment, e.g. pay, hours, grade, job location.
- Clear objectives and required outcomes should be set which link to the Council's goals and objectives and individual's development needs.
- Send official notification form to HR for inserting into the secondees file.
- Notification to Human Resources at all stages of the secondment process.
- All parties should agree the duration of the secondment. Regular review meetings should be scheduled with the employee and host manager, to ensure the secondment is running smoothly.
- All necessary checks such as Criminal Records Bureau to be undertaken if appropriate.
- Identify the terms under which the secondee will return to their substantive post, including issues regarding grade, job content, etc.

- The performance review and development planning arrangements during the secondment.
- The notice period to end the secondment agreement, should it prove to be an unsatisfactory arrangement to any party.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE SECONDMENT

The employee's manager should:

- Maintain regular contact with the employee and host manager.
- Keep the employee informed about any developments, changes and general information about the service, e.g. minutes of meetings, team briefings etc.
- Keep the rest of the team informed.
- Make arrangements for the secondees post/work to be covered during the secondees absence.

The host manager should:

- Arrange an induction programme including health and safety issues, policies/procedures, reporting arrangements, objectives etc.
- Review and manage the employee's performance.
- Maintain regular contact with the seconding manager.
- Address any attendance, absence and conduct issues and liaise with the seconding manager and Human Resources as appropriate.
- Have a copy of, and apply, this document.

The employee should:

- Discuss any problems that arise with the host manager and if necessary the seconding manager.
- Observe the appropriate policies/procedures within the service.
- Maintain regular contact with their seconding manager.

8. TERMS AND CONDITIONS DURING THE SECONDMENT

The pay will depend on the grade of the secondment post.

Annual leave accrued during the secondment should be agreed with the host manager and taken during the secondment.

The policies and procedures applicable during the secondment need to be confirmed prior to commencement by the host manager.

Any other change to terms and conditions should be agreed prior to the commencement of the secondment.

Secondments shall not normally extend beyond the originally agreed period. Where there is a requirement to continue beyond this period a review must be undertaken in consultation with HR to consider whether the secondment should continue, or some other arrangement should be made to cover the duties.

MATERNITY LEAVE AND SICKNESS

Employees on secondment at the commencement of maternity leave will have such payments taken into account in the calculation of their maternity benefits. However, after a period of 28 days absence employees will revert to their substantive post.

Employees on long-term sickness who are continuously absent from work for more than 28 days will return to their substantive post.

9. SUBSTANTIVE POST

The substantive post is the position employees are contracted to undertake. In the case of a secondment opportunity, the employees substantive post may be filled on a temporary basis, and subject to the agreed notice period.

When the secondment finishes the employee may return to their substantive post or a post commensurate with their substantive grade and salary.

If a restructure, organisational or any other service change occurs during the secondment, the employee should be kept fully informed as if they were present in the workplace.

10. RETURN FOLLOWING SECONDMENT

All parties will need to plan the return of the secondee well in advance.

On return to the substantive post, the manager should:

- Discuss the secondment and how the employee can transfer the learning, e.g. new skills/knowledge etc into the workplace.
- Update the employee on any new developments within the team.
- Carry out a review of the employee's return after three months.
- Discuss personal development arrangements.
- Ensure Human Resources are notified of the employee's return in advance.

11. EXTERNAL SECONDMENTS

Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate external secondments, the Council should only consider a secondment if it is not financially detrimental. The secondment may be approved if clear benefits to the Council can be demonstrated or if it is determined by a joint partnership agreement involving the Council.

Regard will be given to the extent to which the work will enhance the employee's future contribution to the Council.

Prior to the secondment being agreed it is essential that all parties concerned are clear about their obligations, expectations, accountabilities, and performance objectives.

The secondee is expected to adhere to all policies of the employing organisation as well as any rules of conduct required by the host organisation.

Identification of all costs and responsibilities for the secondment, including pay, pension, additional employer costs, etc need to be considered prior to the secondment being agreed. In normal circumstances, this would be picked up by the employing organisation.

All Council staff will have an identified personal development plan. This will be the responsibility of the individual and the host organisation to implement.

At the end of the secondment period, feedback and evaluation should be encouraged. This will focus on the mutual benefits that have been obtained from the process and any useful learning in relation to undertaking similar secondment experiences in the future.

SECONDMENT REQUEST

* Please complete all sections

Group:		Division:	
Name:		Pay Number:	
Substantive Post:		Seconded Post:	
Grade/ Salary:		Grade/ Salary:	
Period of secondment:			
Review Date:			
Cost Centre:		No of Hrs:	
<u>Reasons for secondment:</u>			
<u>Line Manager</u>			
Signature:		Date:	
Name:			
<u>Service Director/Head of Service</u>			
Signature:		Date:	
Name:			
<u>HR Manager</u>			
Signature:		Date:	
Name:		Date:	