



DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

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(HR/766)

1. POLICY TITLE

Down District Council Policy on Internal Trawls, Secondments, 'Acting Up' Opportunities and Payment of Honorariums.

2. POLICY AIMS

Down District Council is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity in everything we do including service delivery and employment.

In normal circumstances, all posts should be publicly advertised however, there may be times when Down District Council may need to use alternative recruitment methods. The Council believes that secondment and acting-up opportunities can enable employees to broaden their horizons and understanding, develop new skills and increase their capacity to respond to and contribute to the growth and improvement of service delivery within the Council.

Secondment and acting-up opportunities are recognised by the Council as being valuable for employee development and addressing the need to cover posts. In addition, they offer benefits for all parties involved by:

- Allowing employees to be moved to areas of increased work to meet changing demands
- Providing unique development opportunities for employees to perform in challenging situations
- Enhancing employee motivation
- The transfer of employees skills and knowledge
- Giving employees an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of different services
- Supporting succession planning.

The Council will actively support secondment and acting-up opportunities where it is reasonable and practicable to do so and where operational needs will not be adversely affected however, employees do not have an automatic right to undertake a secondment or 'acting-up' opportunity.



DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

.....
(HR/766)

The Council's approach to achieving this will be in accordance with the Local Government Staff Commission's Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection

3. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies when it is necessary to fill a post on a temporary basis, beyond the first four weeks, which should be covered by short-term arrangements within the department.

The aim of this policy is to enable all eligible employees to have the same opportunity in certain situations for example:

- temporarily covering a post until a substantive appointment can be made
- filling a post to cover for maternity leave
- filling a post to cover long term absence (e.g. sickness absence)
- covering posts due to other temporary absences (e.g. secondment)
- to undertake short term project work
- in redundancy situations or restricted pools, for example trawls, where the council is under an obligation to seek to provide suitable alternative employment for current potentially redundant employees.

4. DEFINITIONS

Secondment Opportunities

A secondment is an opportunity for an employee to undertake a different role to that of their substantive post. There are three types of secondment:

- **Internal Secondment:** A Down District Council employee working in a different area of expertise of the Council;
- **Outgoing Secondment:** A Down District Council employee working in a different organisation whilst retaining their substantive post within the Council; (refer to Section 5 for further information).
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DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

.....
(HR/766)

- **Incoming Secondment:** A Down District Council post that is filled by an employee of another organisation who remains employed by them retaining their substantive post with the employing organisation.

A secondment is typically made up of a number of factors including changes to:

- Work location/organisation,
- The team within which an individual works,
- Line management responsibility held by an individual, or
- Key job role and responsibilities

For secondment opportunities, the exact nature and details of each secondment can vary dependent upon the needs of the post however they are normally for no longer than three years. In situations where an employee of the Council is seconded to another organisation, this will be for a maximum of three years.

Outgoing secondments will only be considered where the hosting/employing organisation is a recognised body for the purposes of continuous service under The Redundancy Modifications Order 1986 (as amended).

Likewise, where we intend to second from an external organisation that organisation may have limits on the length of time they are prepared to second an employee to the Council.

Acting-up Opportunities

These differ from secondments, as they tend to be internal opportunities within a Directorate/Department. Acting-up normally (but not exclusively) occurs, when an individual fills a vacancy, which is of a more senior nature than their substantive post, on a temporary basis. Acting Up arrangements will apply where an individual is required to undertake the full range of duties of an established post.

Acting-up opportunities will normally be for a specific period or to cover for a specific reason i.e. to cover maternity leave, long-term sickness or the period between an employee leaving and a post being filled. With this in mind, there should be a 12 - month maximum limit on the length of an acting-up arrangement to be reviewed thereafter by the manager; in conjunction with Human Resources.



DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

.....
(HR/766)

A period of acting-up will not result in an individual automatically moving into the post substantively. If there is a subsequent appointment to a higher grade, the individual's period of paid acting service will be taken into account to determine the incremental date and point of entry to the higher scale.

Honorariums

An honorarium is a payment made to an employee for the delivery of additional duties (e.g. project work/covering the part-duties of a vacant post); outside of/beyond his/her traditional job role; which are not provided for in his/her Job Description.

The granting of honorariums should be available for all eligible employees to have the same opportunity. This may be across the whole Council, within a certain department or in certain situations restricted to a particular individual.

No offer should be made to anyone until the Senior Management Team is satisfied that a fair procedure has been applied in the selection of an individual and approval given.

5. SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT

During internal and outgoing secondments and many acting-up arrangements the employee's substantive post will normally be covered (perhaps by another secondee, further acting-up arrangements or fixed term employment) and therefore will remain open. The employee will return to their substantive post at the end of the secondment, or in the event of a reorganisation, a suitable alternative will be sought. The Council would expect that similar security be given to employees being seconded from other organisations to the Council. Any long-term secondment or acting up will not confer any rights to an individual of a post other than their substantive employment.



DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

.....
(HR/766)

6. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Pay and Financial Considerations

In the case of internal secondments, employees will be paid the relevant remuneration in line with the grading of the post. For secondments to the Council of employees from other organisations, the employee will be paid by the employing organisation and this includes on-costs and any allowances such as travel and subsistence. The employing organisation can then claim these costs back in arrears or as agreed between both parties. Likewise, where an employee of the Council is seconded to another organisation, the Council would pay the salary, on-costs and expenses and re-charge the costs to the host organisation. Disturbance allowance will only be paid in situations where the secondment/action up opportunity arose as a result of a restructure.

Continuation of Service

As an existing substantive employee of the Council, any employee who is seconded to another organisation which is a recognised body for the purposes of continuous service under The Redundancy Modifications Order 1986 (as amended), will retain the employment rights afforded by continuous employment with the Council throughout the period of the secondment.

Performance/Conduct

For internal secondments and acting-up arrangements, employees will continue to be subject to the Council's Employees' Code of Conduct and employment policies and procedures (including those governing discipline and capability issues).

Incoming secondments will be subject to their organisation's Code of Conduct and behavioural standards.

Employees who are seconded to other organisations will be subject to the Council's Employees' Code of Conduct, Disciplinary or Capability Procedure. As the original employer, the Council would be contacted to jointly address any issues of discipline or capability.



DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

.....
(HR/766)

An individual's performance in an acting up/secondment role should be regularly reviewed. If concerns about performance in a higher grade arise, advice should be sought from Human Resources. These concerns should then be discussed with the member of staff before a decision is made to discontinue the acting-up/secondment arrangement.

7. DURATION OF ARRANGEMENT

For secondment opportunities, the exact nature and details of each secondment can vary dependent upon the needs of the post however they are normally for no longer than three years. In situations where an employee of the Council is seconded to another organisation, this will be for a maximum of three years.

Likewise, where we intend to second from an external organisation that organisation may have limits on the length of time they are prepared to second an employee to the Council.

In most instances, acting-up opportunities will be for a specific period or to cover for a specific reason (e.g. to cover maternity leave, long-term sickness or the period between an employee leaving and a post being filled). As such, there should be a 12 - month maximum limit on the length of an acting-up arrangement to be reviewed thereafter by the manager; in conjunction with Human Resources. In other circumstances, the maximum acting-up period should be no longer than 6 months at the outset.

8. TERMINATION

Either party may terminate secondment and acting-up arrangements in line with the notice provision contained in the confirmation of such agreements. The Council will require a minimum of six months' notice to request early termination of an outgoing secondment. No early return from secondment will be granted from secondments of twelve months or less.



DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

.....
(HR/766)

Furthermore, where the disciplinary and capability procedures are followed a secondment or acting-up arrangements may be terminated without notice by the host manager, if:

- the employee fails or neglects to carry out efficiently and diligently the reasonable instruction of the host manager; or
- the host manager considers that the individual's actions or behaviours represent gross misconduct.

Incoming secondment arrangements will be terminated immediately by the employing organisation if the secondee ceases (for whatever reason) to be employed by them.

9. RELATED POLICIES

- Down District Council Recruitment Policy
- Down District Council Policy on Use of Employment Agency Workers

10. POLICY OWNER

Director of Corporate Services

11. POLICY AUTHORISATION

Agreed at Local Joint Consultative Committee 15 December 2010

Approved at Strategic Policy and Resources Committee 10 January 2011

Ratified by Council on 24 January 2011

12. POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE

1 April 2011



DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY ON INTERNAL TRAWLS, SECONDMENTS, 'ACTING UPS' AND HONORARIUMS

.....
(HR/766)

13. PROCEDURES

Down District Council Procedures To Be Followed for Internal Trawls, Secondments, 'Acting Ups' and Honorariums.

14. . EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This Policy has been assessed on 24 February 2011 under Down District Council's Equality Impact Assessment process and has been screened out as having no impact on any of the groups designated in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

15. POLICY REVIEW

The Human Resources Manager will monitor and review this policy and present any necessary changes; following consultation via the Local Joint Consultative Committee.