

Secondment Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As set out in the People Promise, Brighton and Hove City Council are committed to develop all our people to do their best and to identify talent to support progression.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that enabling staff secondments to resource temporary projects or assignments can provide benefits to both the organisation and the employees concerned.
- 1.3 Secondment opportunities to suitable posts will be encouraged to give people internal development opportunities.
- 1.4 In addition the Council encourages secondments to and from partnership organisations where appropriate.
- 1.5 Posts identified as suitable for a secondment opportunity for up to two years' may be advertised internally and to appropriate partnership organisations identified for the post.
- 1.6 This Policy sets out a framework to ensure the effective management of secondments and the fair and consistent treatment of secondees.

2 Purpose

2.1 The Policy aims to:

- enable the Council to better meet its business needs and objectives
- improve partnership working with other organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors thereby raising the Council's profile and reputation
- provide development opportunities for employees
- facilitate the retention of high calibre employees and their valuable skills and experience
- enable the Council to benefit from increased motivation and the broadening of experience, knowledge and skills of employees returning from internal or outward secondments.

3 Scope

3.1 This Policy applies to:

- internal secondments i.e. those within the Council
- external secondments i.e. existing Council employees working temporarily for another organisation

4 Definitions

4.1 "Host" – the receiving department or employer

“Employing Organisation” – the statutory employer who holds the contract for the employee.

5 Duration of Secondments

The normal duration of secondments will be up to two years.

In exceptional circumstances, ie, to complete an ongoing project, this may be extended, please discuss with HR in the first instance.

6. Suitable posts for secondment opportunities

A post advertised as a secondment should be a post limited for up to two years

Examples of this would be

- It is covering the temporary absence of the substantive period, ie on maternity leave
- It is a project and the role will end when the project is complete
- It is temporary role pending a service redesign (to be complete within 12 months)

7 Eligibility to Apply for Secondments

7.1 Permanent employees are eligible to apply for a secondment where they have:

- held their current post for at least twelve months **and**
- there is a defined development need that may be met through the secondment **or**
- there is a defined organisational need that will be met via the secondment

7.2 Temporary employees are not eligible to apply for vacancies on a secondment basis.

8. General Principles of External Secondments

8.1 The following principles will apply to secondments involving the Council and an external organisation:

- a secondee will continue to be paid by their employing organisation and will therefore remain an employee of that organisation.
- the full employment cost of an external secondment (i.e. salary, employer's national insurance and pension contributions, etc. plus on-costs) will be met by the host organisation. The Council will continue to pay the employee but will invoice the host organisation to recover these costs.
- the cost of internal secondments will be met by the host department (Note: this does not extend to the cost of “back-filling” the secondee).

9. Employment Conditions of Secondees

- 9.1 Where the secondment is agreed the employee will have an automatic right to return to their substantive job at the end of the secondment. If there are any changes during the period of secondment that would affect a substantive post, the manager is required to inform and consult the secondee of the changes and outline the impact and options as a result. Advice should be sought from Human Resources.
- 9.2 Where the secondee will receive a higher salary on secondment, at the end of the secondment, they will revert to the level of salary that would have applied had they remained in the substantive job.
- 9.3 Managers must ensure that employees who are on secondment (internal or external) are formally consulted over any proposed changes such as restructuring etc. which may directly or indirectly affect their substantive job.
- 9.4 The Council will make every effort to find suitable, alternative employment for secondees whose substantive post has been deleted or significantly changed such that the terms and conditions are substantially less favourable than they would have enjoyed prior to the secondment.
- 9.5 The Council cannot guarantee finding suitable, alternative employment for returning secondees in these circumstances.
- 9.6 Where the Council has been unable to secure suitable alternative employment for a secondee who is otherwise redundant, the cost of any redundancy will be met by the department in which the secondee was employed immediately prior to commencing the secondment.
- 9.7 If a secondment opportunity becomes a permanent post it will usually need to be advertised in the normal way.
- 9.8 If an employee has been seconded into the post for more than one year and the opportunity to continue in the post permanently arises the manager may choose to appoint them permanently to the post without a further recruitment process subject to the Appointment Support Process being followed.

9 Advertising Secondments

Internal secondments

- 9.1 The line manager should discuss initially with HR if they are considering advertising a post internally as a secondment
- 9.2 All secondments must be advertised and equalities monitoring data must be recorded.
- 9.3 The advertisement should clearly state the duration of the secondment up to a period of two years.

9.4 In accordance with the Council's "Organisation Change Framework Policy" under "Redeployment Policy", all secondment opportunities will be screened for a possible 'match' against those employees on the Council's Redeployment register prior to advertising.

9.5 Recruitment to the vacancy will be in accordance with the Council's normal recruitment and selection practices.

External secondments

9.6 Appointments will be made in accordance with the host organisation's recruitment and selection procedures.

10 Obligations on Employees Applying for a Secondment

10.1 Employees wishing to apply for a post on the basis of either an internal or external secondment must secure the written approval of their line manager before applying and evidence of this must be included with their application.

11 Considering Requests for a Secondment

11.1 A secondment request should only be refused where there are good business reasons for doing so and this can be objectively justified.

12 Terms of the Secondment

12.1 In order to avoid any misunderstanding, it is imperative that the terms and conditions of the secondment are agreed at the outset between the originating department/organisation, the host department/organisation and the secondee.

12.2 Managers involved in arranging a secondment (internal or external) are strongly advised to seek advice from Human Resources at the earliest possible opportunity.

13 Managing the Secondment - Responsibilities

The host department or organisation:

13.1 It is usual practice for the host department/organisation to be responsible for the following aspects of the secondment:

- briefing the secondee prior to the secondment commencing
- ensuring that all costs for the secondee are being met by the host department and are allocated to the correct budget code and establishment
- re-imbursing the secondee for any travel, subsistence or out of pocket expenses etc. incurred whilst carrying out the duties associated with the secondment, where applicable
- providing induction at the commencement of the secondment and any training which may be required
- providing regular two-way meetings to discuss progress and any other issues arising during the secondment period

- maintaining and notifying the secondee's originating department/organisation of their attendance record
- notifying the secondee's originating department/organisation regarding any incident of gross or serious misconduct or lack of capability
- ensuring that the secondee complies with all relevant health and safety requirements
- providing the secondee with a de-briefing session at the end of the secondment.

The secondee's originating department or organisation:

13.2 It is usual practice for the secondee's originating department or organisation to be responsible for the following aspects of the secondment:

- arranging for the secondee's post to be covered during the period of the secondment
- checking that the secondee has been briefed by the host department/organisation
- *internal secondment*: checking that the secondee's salary, employer's national insurance and pension contributions etc. are being charged to the host department's budget code and establishment
- *external secondment to an outside organisation*: ensuring that the secondee continues to be paid by the Council and that the administrative arrangements have been set up to recover these costs from the host organisation. To include, notifying the host organisation of any increase in the secondee's pay as a result of annual pay awards, incremental progression etc.
- participating in regular meetings with the secondee and the host department/organisation to discuss progress and any issues arising during the secondment period
- keeping the secondee in touch whilst they are away with any developments in the department/organisation or with any matters affecting the secondee's substantive post e.g., re-structuring, redundancy issues etc.
- ensuring that the secondee is properly de-briefed and supported during the period of re-integration into the workplace
- identifying what has been learned during the secondment and how the experience and skills can be applied in the workplace
- ensuring that, where appropriate, redeployment opportunities are sought for the secondee in good time and before the secondment comes to an end (see the Council's "Organisation Change Framework Policy").

14 Monitoring

14.1 The operation of the policy in practice will need to be carefully monitored to ensure that decisions to recruit to secondment opportunities and managers' decisions to release staff on secondment are not influenced by factors such as an employee's gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion or belief.

