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**Human Resources & Workforce
Development**

**GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS ON
ACTING ALLOWANCES AND HONORARIA PAYMENTS**

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Council acknowledges that in certain circumstances there is a need for an employee to cover additional duties which fall outside the normal requirements of their role.

1.2 These guidance notes sets out the types of payments that can be made and the circumstances when they should be paid. The form set out in Appendix 1 must be completed for all requests to pay an acting allowance or honoraria.

1.3 It is important that managers follow these guidance notes to ensure that these additional payments are made in a fair and equitable manner. Failure to follow this guidance could expose the Council to financial liability and could result in disciplinary action against the manager.

2. Acting Allowances

Criteria for payment of an Acting Allowance

2.1 A manager can consider paying an acting allowance where there is a vacant post within their structure and the manager feels that it would not be appropriate to fill the post on a permanent basis (for example, where there is an impending restructure or where a post is temporarily vacant, for example, due to maternity leave or long term sickness).

2.2 Acting allowances can only be paid where the following criteria are fully satisfied:

- (a) There is a vacant funded post within the structure with a current job description for an employee to “act up” into;
- (b) The period for which the acting allowance will be paid is at least four weeks in duration;
- (c) There will only be one member of staff acting up into the vacant post, unless two job sharers will be sharing the responsibilities of the post;
- (d) The acting up allowance is not being paid for purposes of covering annual leave; and
- (e) The employee has been covering the additional duties for a period of at least 4 weeks without payment.

If any of these criteria are not met then consideration can be given to payment of an honorarium (see 3.1 below).

Conditions attached to an Acting Allowance

2.3 Where an acting allowance is granted, the employee will be expected to carry out the full duties and responsibilities of the higher graded job.

2.4 The employee must be treated the same as if they had been offered the post on a permanent basis and afforded the same terms and conditions. Accordingly, all pay and annual leave, overtime and any other premium payment must be paid at the acting rate and is not subject to the manager’s discretion. If the post (as opposed to the previous post holder)

attracted a car user allowance, then the person acting-up should be granted the same car user allowance albeit on a temporary basis (which would preclude the employee from applying for a car loan).

2.5 All other terms and conditions which apply to the employee's substantive post remain unaffected.

Advertising the Acting Opportunities

2.6 If the acting allowance is payable for a short period of time, is of a specialist nature or would require the post holder to have a good working knowledge and experience of working practices within the section, then all such acting opportunities should only be considered for employees within the section in which the vacancy occurs. The manager does not need to advertise this type of vacancy. In this situation, the manager should instead publicise the acting position within the relevant part of the service and invite employees to express an interest in the post by a given date. The job description and a person specification must be made available to employees.

2.7 The manager must ensure all reasonable steps are taken so that all relevant members of staff are made aware of the vacancy and are given the opportunity to apply for it wherever possible, including any staff on maternity leave.

2.8 If the acting allowance is payable or is likely to be payable for a longer period (six months or more) it must be treated as a positive career opportunity and be advertised across the Council under the normal recruitment procedure. The acting allowance vacancy will normally be advertised as a secondment.

Selection

2.10 If only one member of staff expresses an interest and the manager is satisfied they are capable of fulfilling the higher graded post, then they will be automatically offered the acting allowance.

2.11 Should more than one employee wish to be considered for the post, or a manager is unsure about an employee's ability to satisfactorily carry out the higher graded duties, a limited recruitment interview will take place in conjunction with Human Resources. All such acting arrangements must be checked with Human Resources.

2.12 In very exceptional circumstances, a manager can ask an employee to undertake acting duties without placing an advert or conducting an interview. This would only apply where there is only one person of sufficient seniority within the service who would possess the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to undertake the higher graded duties. All such acting arrangements must be agreed by the Service Head following consultation with the Human Resource Business Partner.

Duration of Acting Allowances

2.13 Acting allowances must not be paid for more than 12 months without the express approval of the Director of the relevant Directorate. The relevant manager who has approved the acting allowance is responsible for obtaining this approval prior to the 12 month deadline and sending a copy of this approval to Human Resources.

2.14 In any event, these arrangements must be regularly reviewed by managers to ensure that the acting arrangement is still appropriate and to consider whether it is appropriate to permanently recruit to the post.

2.15 Human Resources will also from time to time review the acting arrangements.

Acting Allowances and Assimilation

2.16 Employees who are in receipt of an acting allowance do not have an automatic right to be formally offered the post at any stage.

3. Honoraria Payments

Criteria for Paying an Honorarium

3.1 Honoraria payments can be made where the 'acting allowance' criteria has not been met but the following criteria apply:

- (a) An employee is undertaking additional duties which are particularly onerous.
- (b) There is more than one employee covering duties for which an acting allowance would normally be payable.
- (c) An employee is temporarily undertaking specific duties beyond the normal scope of their post over an extended period.

3.2 Where an employee has a permanent variation to their duties they should request Human Resources to evaluate their job under the Individual Right to Review Mechanism contained in the Job Evaluation Procedure.

Level of Payment

3.3 Where an employee is temporarily undertaking specific additional, higher graded or particularly demanding duties, honorarium payments will normally equate to the difference between the employees' current grade and spinal column point, and the first spinal column point of the higher grade.

3.4 For example, an employee who is Scale 6 (scp 27) will be paid a monthly honorarium payment equivalent to the difference between their substantive Scale 6 salary and Scale SO1 (scp 29).

3.5 There is, however, provision to appoint on any spinal column point within the higher grade in the following circumstances:

(a) The manager is satisfied that the additional duties being undertaken are particularly demanding and service delivery would suffer if the duties were not carried out, or

(b) In situations where spinal column points within a grade overlap e.g. Principal Officer scales.

This discretion to appoint on a higher spinal column point rests with the Section Head in conjunction with the Service Head, but should be ratified by Human Resources to ensure consistency of application.

3.6 For the avoidance of doubt, where an employee is in receipt of overtime payments, these will be made at the employee's substantive rate rather than at the honoraria rate.

Exceptions to Arrangements

3.7 If a manager is satisfied that the duties and responsibilities undertaken by an employee are of a particularly contentious or complex nature and similar duties would normally be remunerated in excess of one grade above the employee's substantive post, then a new job description should be written and evaluated by a joint panel as per the Grade Assessment stage of Job Evaluation Procedure.

3.8 The Chief Executive has discretion to award Honoraria payments for any substantial work that is delegated by or on behalf of the Chief Executive and is beyond the normal job requirements of an employee's substantive post. Guidance will be provided by the Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development based on the above criteria to determine the amount of the honorarium that will be paid.

Duration of Honoraria

3.9 Honoraria must not be paid for more than 12 months without the express approval of the relevant Corporate Director. The relevant manager who has approved the honoraria is responsible for obtaining this approval prior to the 12 month deadline and sending a copy of this approval to Human Resources.

4. Payment of Acting Allowances and Honoraria

4.1 All acting allowances and honoraria payments are paid one month in arrears.

4.2 Managers are responsible for notifying Human Resources when the employee starts and stops carrying out the additional duties. Payroll will then ensure that the additional payment ceases when notified by Human Resources.

4.3 Human Resources will write to the employee to confirm the temporary variation in their contract of employment. The letter will confirm the date when the temporary variation will take effect, the terms and conditions of their employment (e.g. salary, annual leave) that are affected by the payment of the acting allowance or honoraria and confirmation that no other terms and conditions of their employment are affected. Human Resources will also write to the employee when the honoraria or acting allowance ceases.

5. Impact of additional payments on annual increments

5.1 Staff in receipt of an acting allowance will receive annual increments on both their acting and substantive positions. If an acting allowance commences between 1st April and 30th September, employees will receive an increment on the following 1st April. If they commence acting between the 1st October and 31st March, they will receive an increment on their acting grade six months from date of commencement.

5.2 Staff who are in receipt of an honorarium payment will only receive annual increments on their substantive grades. Accordingly, it is not unusual for an employee's honorarium payment to decrease over a period of time.

5.3 Any payments for additional duties undertaken will automatically be updated by the payroll section in line with any national pay awards where appropriate.

6. Impact of employee absence on additional payments

6.1 Honoraria and acting payments are made to employees on the basis that they are actively undertaking additional duties.

6.2 If an employee reaches the 5 day trigger point under the Sickness Management Procedure, the relevant manager must consider whether it is appropriate for the employee to continue to receive the Acting Allowance or Honoraria payment during future periods of absence.

6.3 Staff who do not adhere to the absence reporting requirements of the Sickness Management Procedure will not receive occupational sick pay for the period they have not complied and will have additional payments stopped immediately. However, managers should investigate the circumstances to establish whether there was a satisfactory reason e.g. the employee was involved in an accident and hospitalised.

6.4 If an employee is receiving an additional payment and undertakes a period of leave of 3 weeks or more in duration, their acting payment will be suspended from the first day of leave until such time as they return to work. It is for the manager to consider the appropriateness of reinstating the acting arrangement, if it is still required, on the employee's return.

6.5 Any additional payment will cease from the day that an employee commences maternity leave. There is no automatic entitlement for the payment to continue upon return to work. It is for the manager to consider the appropriateness of reinstating the acting arrangement, if it is still required, on the employee's return.

7. Further information

7.1 For further information or advice, please contact your Human Resources Business Partner.

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