

Secondments

1. Who does this policy apply to?

- 1.1 All employees of Lancaster City Council.

2. What is the purpose of this policy?

- 2.1 Secondments are an essential tool for fostering leadership, skill enhancement, and the continuity of expertise in key areas. By strategically aligning secondments with Lancaster City Council's succession planning objectives, we aim to develop talent that is prepared to lead and sustain organisational priorities over time. They can be a useful way to enable employees to gain new skills and experience while meeting short-term staffing needs. A secondment can either be full time, for the whole working time of the secondee, or part time, where part of the secondee's working time is spent in the employee's substantive job, and part in the seconded job.
- 2.2 In line with our Dignity, Equity and Inclusion policy, the selection process for new opportunities needs to be transparent and fair. The Secondment Policy should be read in conjunction with the Recruitment and Selection policy.

3. What roles do the employee, line managers, the Council and HR play in this policy?

3.1 Employee Responsibilities

- To discuss any secondment opportunities with their substantive manager and gain approval for release prior to applying.
- If a release on secondment, or extension to a secondment, is not agreed, and the employee wishes to be considered for the job on a fixed term contract basis, to discuss this with the substantive line manager to understand the implications of doing so on their employment contract. Getting advice from HR is also recommended.
- At the end of the secondment, to reflect on and capture learning, skills and experience gained and discuss how this might benefit their substantive role with the substantive line manager.
- Undertake any training required when returning to the substantive post.

3.2 Line Manager Responsibilities

- To decide whether to release the employee from their substantive job for the period of the secondment, supporting requests for release where possible.
- Managers are encouraged to consider secondment opportunities as part of employees' Individual Development Plans (IDPs) where applicable, to support the development of skills identified as essential for future roles within the Council.
- When deciding whether or not to release an employee to a seconded role, to consider the temporary backfill arrangements, impact on the team, additional training required and whether to cover the absence on a fixed term basis.
- If refusing a secondment request, to have clear business reasons for the decision and to explain these clearly to the employee.

- ❑ To make arrangements to ensure that the secondee is kept in touch regularly with general developments affecting their substantive job.
- ❑ To meet with the secondee prior to their return date.
- ❑ To ensure that the secondee understands that if the post they are seconded to is at a higher grade, that they will return to their previous substantive grade.

3.3 Secondment Line Manager Responsibilities

- ❑ To advertise/fill the opportunity through the appropriate resourcing process giving suitable employees equal opportunity to apply.
- ❑ To meet the salary costs of the secondee, including any sick or other pay.
- ❑ To identify any contractual changes for the duration of the secondment in conjunction with HR.
- ❑ To ensure that HR is notified, and any required pre-employment checks are carried out before the secondment starts.
- ❑ To ensure any reasonable adjustments are put in place prior to the start of the secondment.
- ❑ To provide an induction and any relevant training or development an employee may reasonably need to carry out the role.
- ❑ To agree objectives relating to the seconded job, which should be reflected in the secondees performance conversations.
- ❑ To assume day to day management responsibility, including for leave and absence.
- ❑ To report to the substantive manager any performance, health and safety, grievance or disciplinary matter that relates to the secondee which arises out of the secondment.
- ❑ To review the secondment and contact the substantive manager and the secondee at least three months prior to the secondee's proposed return date to their substantive job.
- ❑ To reflect with the secondee on the learning, skills and experience gained, and to evaluate the success of the secondment and make any recommendations for further development if appropriate.
- ❑ If the second arrangement is with an external organisation, to liaise with finance and the external organisation to ensure that the appropriate cross charging arrangements are in place.

3.4 HR Responsibilities

- ❑ To support both substantive and secondment line managers to facilitate secondments.
- ❑ To provide employees with the the associated documentation related to any terms and conditions changes.

3.5 Council responsibilities

- ❑ To encourage managers to facilitate learning and development opportunities where possible.
- ❑ To provide guidance to line managers on their respective responsibilities.

4. Secondments

Internal

4.1 Where an employee is seconded into a temporary position elsewhere in the Council.

External

4.2 Where an employee is seconded into a temporary position with another employer, but LCC remains the employer and the secondee will continue to be subject to LCC's policies and procedures. A secondment agreement will always be necessary with an external secondment to ensure the rights and responsibilities of all parties are captured appropriately. It will also be necessary for a Chief Officer to approve an external secondment.

Inward

- 4.3 Where an employee from another employer is seconded into a temporary position at LCC, and LCC are the host, and not the employer.

5. Duration of Secondment

- 5.1 A secondment should be for a period of up to two years and they can only be extended beyond two years in exceptional circumstances. All parties will need to agree any extension to the original secondment. Services should monitor and manage secondments effectively to ensure they do not continue indefinitely. Should a secondment be required for longer than two years initially, the relevant line manager should seek support from HR as due consideration should be given to whether this should be a permanent opportunity.
- 5.2 A seconded employee does not have an automatic entitlement to be “slotted” into the post they are seconded into if it becomes permanent. The vacancy should be advertised in the usual way, and if the secondee is unsuccessful they will revert back to their substantive role. Due regard should always be given to anybody on the redeployment list whenever a vacancy arises.

6. Contractual Arrangements

- 6.1 HR will issue a secondment agreement or a secondment letter confirming the arrangements of the secondment.
- 6.2 The salary, grade and terms and conditions of employment of the seconded employee will be those applicable to the secondment post. These may be more generous than those applying to the secondee’s substantive post. For the avoidance of doubt, the seconded employee will be eligible to increment according to the seconded post, and they will not lose out on any increments which would have been applicable should they have remained in their substantive post.
- 6.3 If there is no agreement from the substantive line manager to release the employee from their substantive job, or to extend an existing secondment agreement, the employee may decide to accept an offer of a fixed term contract instead and resign from their substantive job. There will be no right of return to their substantive job and a fixed term contract will be issued.
- 6.4 If the secondment is to be extended, the secondment manager must obtain agreement from the substantive manager and employee. HR will then issue a secondment extension.
- 6.5 If the secondment is required to end early for any reason, instigated by any party i.e. there is a change to service requirements, the secondment will end with the agreement of the secondment line manager and the substantive line manager, subject to a minimum notice period to be agreed between all parties. If the employee resigns from LCC the normal contractual notice period will apply.
- 6.6 Employees seconded to external organisations retain full continuity of employment with LCC and will remain an employee of the Council throughout.

7. Organisational Change

- 7.1 If the employee’s substantive job is included in a restructure during the secondment period, the employee will automatically be fully included in any consultation process which affects the job, including being placed on the redeployment list.
- 7.2 If the substantive job is deleted from the structure, the term “secondment” will no longer apply as there is no substantive job to return to. The secondee may continue in the secondment role until their last day of notice, provided that this was agreed with all parties and the notice provisions of the secondment were adhered to. Following this, if the employee continued in the temporary job, this would have to be on a fixed term contractual basis (which would also include a statutory four-week trial period). At the end of the fixed term contract period, employment would be terminated unless an alternative job could be secured.

HR advice should be sought, and the employee made fully aware, in writing, of the implications of the changed contractual status, prior to them being asked to make a decision as regards to their continuation, or otherwise, in their substantive job.

8. When will this policy be reviewed?

8.1 This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or earlier in the event of legislative change.

Document Control:

Version no.	Effective Date	Reason	Review due
1.0		Brand new policy	2026