

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

30 January 2014

Joint Honorarium Policy

Report of Head of Transformation

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Council's Joint Honorarium Policy in Appendix 1.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended;

- 1.1 To approve the new Joint Honorarium Policy (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To agree to the implementation of the new joint policy with effect from 3 February 2014 subject to the Appointments and Personnel Committee at South Northamptonshire Council resolving in similar terms.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 This policy will apply to all employees of Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils. There will be situations where an employee may be requested to undertake some additional duties, or to cover the higher level work of an absent employee on sick leave or a vacant post on a temporary basis, such that some form of additional payment would be appropriate but would not necessarily justify a permanent adjustment to salary by means of a re-evaluation of their substantive post. These arrangements are detailed in Sections 5, 6 & 9 of this policy.
- 2.2 An Honorarium will only be paid where the interim arrangements last for a minimum of 4 weeks. They should be reviewed at the end of a six month period at the latest.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 Any Honorarium must be approved following the Vacancy Assessment Process which is already in place at both Councils.
- 3.2 The payment of Honorariums applies in two different scenarios; firstly, where an employee is asked to act up to part of a job and secondly, where an employee is offered the opportunity to act up to the full range of duties at a higher grade.
- 3.3 For each case, there is a specific procedure which needs to be followed, set out in the policy. The guidance specifically relates to determining the honorarium payment and increment in each case.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 This new policy will give clarity to the scenarios where the payment of an honorarium is appropriate and ensure that there is consistency in their adoption between both Councils.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 Formal consultation with the recognised union and staff consultation group commenced on 9 December 2013 and ended on 6 January 2014. Meetings to receive any comments were held on Thursday 9 January and Thursday 16 January. One specific comment was recorded on the consultation log in relation to the policy.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: If the policy in Appendix 1 is not approved then, the Council will not be able to offer development opportunities to staff to take on additional responsibilities and duties.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 This policy provides a framework for the implementation of Honorariums for both Councils. The guidance for the approval and application of Honorariums should ensure that financial accountability measures are in place.

Comments checked by: Joanne Kaye, Interim Strategic Accountant, 01295 221545, joanne.kaye@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 The main legislation which is referred to in this policy is the Equality Act 2010. It is important that Managers can demonstrate that a fair process has taken place to ensure that the most appropriate person is selected to undertake any of these special arrangements. It is also important that honoraria are implemented on a prospective, as opposed to retrospective, basis as legal difficulties can arise if an employee is paid an honorarium which is in effect a reward for past services rendered when there has been no prior contractual change to justify the payment.

Comments checked by Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, Tel No. 03000030107, kevin.lane@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk implications

- 7.3 Any risk in applying an honorarium would be mitigated by following the guidance in this document and seeking advice from the HR Team.

Comments checked by: Louise Tustian, Senior Performance and Improvement Officer, Tel. 01295 221786, louise.tustian2@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

None

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Strategic Priority Enhance Performance and Key Objective Deliver the Council's Transformation programme.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Joint Honorarium Policy
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Gina Thomas, HR Business Partner Paula Goodwin, HR and OD Manager
Contact Information	01327 322328 gina.thomas@southnorthants.gov.uk 01295 221734 Paula.Goodwin@Cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk