

# HUMAN RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE



## ANNEX 4

### SECONDMENT POLICY, PROCESS and GUIDANCE

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APPROVED AT ..... MEETING, ON .....DATE.....

# HUMAN RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE



## SECONDMENT POLICY

### 1 Policy

- 1.1 The Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) is committed to facilitating personal development opportunities leading to continuous improvement for service delivery and employment. This policy provides a process for secondment opportunities to be explored as a tool for improvement and personal development. Secondments must serve the operational/service interests of the PDNPA as well as the needs of employees.

### 2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all PDNPA employees performing competently in their current role.

### 3 Background Information

- 3.1 In order to keep pace with the changing and increasingly complex nature of work it is important to continuously develop employee's skills and knowledge. Secondment provides a powerful means of developing individuals and the organisation. Secondments with other employers can develop an outward focus, an increased understanding of stakeholders and generally broaden skills and knowledge.

The attached guidance is intended for employees who have been identified as candidates for secondment and their line managers. The guidance explains the purpose of secondments, the types of secondment opportunities that are available and the way they are managed

External secondment allows for the placement of staff in public bodies, voluntary organisations and the private sector, for periods from a few days up to twelve months. It promotes better understanding between organisations and is a practical and effective form of personal and organisational development. It gives staff first hand experience of a different work environment and the different issues and challenges. Staff have an opportunity to learn new skills, new ways of working and dealing with problems. The knowledge and experience can be brought back to the benefit of the PDNPA. In addition external secondment can provide opportunities for development which may not exist in the PDNPA and for career development into positions with greater responsibility.

There are several types of secondment:

**Outward secondment:** when a staff member takes up a temporary post outside the PDNPA for a given period of time.

**Inward secondment:** a temporary appointment to the PDNPA of an individual who

is an employee of another organisation.

**Shorter term secondments:** these can be outward or inward and are likely to be for several days, either as a block of time or a series of days over a given period. They are regarded as part of an employee's existing job.

**Internal secondments:** these are temporary arrangements within the PDNPA, usually of 6-12 months as a temporary appointment to a vacancy. It usually provides a valuable developmental experience, enabling staff at all levels to broaden their knowledge and ability to cope effectively with the demands of change. It can also be used as a means of continuous professional development.

At the start of a secondment the host employer, the line manager and the secondee should set out its purpose, what will be achieved and how the learning will be applied through the individual work programme. The aims and objectives should be reviewed during the secondment through the Joint Performance and Achievement Review (JPAR) process. Outputs should be identified which can be measured before, during and after the secondment. At the end, the secondee and the host/line manager should review the aims and objectives for the secondment and the learning outcomes.

- 3.2 Secondments must serve the operational/service interests of the PDNPA. They should bring some direct and measurable benefit to the work of the PDNPA. Secondments should also bring a direct benefit by providing valuable developmental experience for the secondee.

**The benefits of secondments for:**

**The PDNPA for external secondments and the service for internal secondments:**

- having a more outward looking (authority or service) and widely skilled employees
- improving employee's ability to do their job by increasing understanding of stakeholders' operating environments/other services or the "one organisation culture"
- building up networks of useful contacts in other organisations/services
- playing a part in developing the PDNPA as a learning organisation through bringing back knowledge and good practice from organisations in other sectors/other services.

**The host employer/host service:**

- gaining a fresh outlook on the operation of their organisation/service
- gaining knowledge on managing relationships with the PDNPA/the organisation culture
- identifying contacts that could be useful sources of advice in the future.

**The individual:**

- learning to adapt to new situations and to transfer/learn new skills
- developing contacts and networks gaining knowledge and skills in a new

- environment
- gaining a broader outlook into different organisations/services.

**The negative impact of secondment can be:**

- Where a secondment is extended for some considerable time an employee can feel reluctant to go back to their substantive post. The “going back” can feel difficult when the employee has proven they are capable of working at a higher level but without the secondment the employee would not have had the opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Following a secondment an employee can use the experience to demonstrate skills and experience in their substantive role and in future job applications.

#### **4. Equality and Diversity**

Secondment must be managed fairly and free from discrimination. When arranging a secondment those involved should be aware of the tensions that can arise between working to ensure equal opportunities and meeting the specific development needs of individual members of staff.

The key expectations are that:

- access to secondment opportunities should arise from performance discussions (JPAP) and be recorded in Learning and Development Plans, ensuring that as wide a range of staff as possible be considered for the opportunity to develop through secondment. Rarely there may be operational restrictions applied to secondments (e.g. budget restrictions).
- ensuring that where other organisations make direct requests for secondees to the PDNPA opportunity is widely available across the whole organisation
- Advertising external secondment opportunities and recruiting to them in the normal way.

#### **5. Process**

- 5.1 The process for secondment sometimes requires a case being made to support a secondment, including analysis of the implications i.e. the benefits and any appropriate contingency. This may include an employee being offered an appointment to a vacant post on a temporary basis, possibly due to restricted funding, as a secondment.

**Employee request:**

- employee makes case demonstrating the value of outward secondment/secondment to another service
- employee and manager meet to discuss
- manager discusses case with Head of Service
- Head of Service, in consultation with Head of HR&P, decides if employee would benefit and advises employee to seek opportunities/supports secondment aspirations.

**Management initiative:**

- manager makes case demonstrating the value of a secondment

- manager and Head of Service meet to discuss
- Head of Service, in consultation with Head of HR&P, decides and agrees appropriate recruitment process.

5.2 The final decision should be confirmed in writing, setting out the rationale.

5.3 If required, there is a right of appeal, which can be exercised by following the PDNPA's Appeals Process.

5.4 Budget implications: the receiving department/employer will pay the salary and expenses of the secondee. If the secondment is inter-employer PDNPA can continue to pay salary but will be reimbursed via invoice to the receiving employer.

5.5 At the commencement of a secondment the secondee will have a meeting to discuss their work programme, a 4-month JPAR and a JPAR at the conclusion.

5.6 At the end of a secondment the employee has the right to return to their substantive post and grade. Occasionally a secondment may be extended for a defined period of time, possibly limited by funding, retaining the right to return to their substantive role and grade at the end of the extension.

5.7 Both manager and employee should carefully consider if it is appropriate to extend a secondment beyond 12 months as the employee may become more out of date with their substantive post and may find it difficult to return.

## **6. Manager responsibilities**

6.1 To ensure HR&P are informed of all cases, for monitoring purposes.

6.2 To seek advice from HR&P when considering the employment aspects of the business case.

6.3 To consider secondment opportunities in a fair and reasonable way, taking due account of individual and business considerations, for example:

- help to ensure that there are sound operational and individual development reasons for a secondment
- assist the employee to explore the implications of going on secondment
- consider the financial implications.

## **7. Employee responsibilities**

7.1 To thoroughly consider and prepare for secondment - demonstrating issues and implications have been thought through.

7.2 To identify learning opportunities before the secondment and review them during and at the end of the secondment.

7.3 To be prepared to return to substantive post bringing learning and new skills back to that post.

## **8. HR&P responsibilities**

- 8.1 To give advice and guidance to managers and employees on the policy.
- 8.2 To monitor cases and provide management information.
- 8.3 The HR&P Team will issue secondment offer letters.
- 8.4 The HR&P Team will also evaluate the outcomes of secondment activity at a corporate level.
- 8.5 The HR&P Team is responsible for supporting individuals and managers in the implementation of policy. Support can range from help in sourcing a potential secondee to advice on a suitable induction etc.

## **9. Relevant Legislation and Key PDNPA Policies**

Work and Families Act 2006  
Equality Act 2006  
Employment Rights Order 2006  
Employment Relations Act 2004  
Employment Act 2002  
Disability Discrimination Act 2005  
Age Discrimination Act 2006  
Data Protection Act 1998  
Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992  
PDNPA employment policies  
PDNPA Joint Performance and Achievement Review process  
PDNPA Appeals Policy  
PDNPA Comprehensive Equality Policy (particularly Equality in Employment)