

Long Service Award Policy

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1. Objectives and scope

- 1.1 Reading Borough Council appreciates the invaluable contribution made by all employees and wishes to encourage and reward loyalty, motivation and experience.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council recognises service and commitment to the objectives and values of the Council, and to the residents of the Borough. It applies irrespective of role, grade and full- or part-time status.
- 1.3 The terms of this policy may be varied from time to time at the organisation's discretion.
- 1.4 The policy does not form part of employees' contracts of employment.
- 1.5 The policy applies to all employees of Reading Borough Council. It excludes agency staff, casual workers and staff employed in voluntary-aided schools and academies.

2. Awards

- 2.1 The Council grants long service awards in the following circumstances.
- 2.2 A one-off money award at 20 years continuous service with either Reading Borough Council (RBC) or a combination of Berkshire County Council (BCC)/RBC service will be given. This award will be for £1,000.
- 2.3 There will be a provision for employees to “trade in” all or part of the long service award for additional days leave in the 20th year of service. This will be up to a maximum of 10 days leave, at the current rate of £100 per day (for example, an employee may choose to have an extra 5 days leave, which will thus take the cash award down to £500). (NB This provision for extra leave may not be possible for school-based or term time only staff).
- 2.4 Former RBC employees appointed before 1 April 1998 will be offered the option of protecting the previous RBC long service and retirement award provisions, which include a financial element (uprated annually by inflation) and double leave (see 2.5) entitlements. If this option is taken, only continuous Reading Borough Council service will count towards the 20 years' service.
- 2.5 Double leave means – double annual leave entitlement for the year in which the twentieth anniversary takes place. This does not include the four extra statutory days that are added to the basic leave entitlement. For most people this will mean that in the twentieth anniversary year, they will receive an extra 28 days annual leave bringing the total number of days to 60 (32 days + 28 days).

- 2.6 Former RBC employees who take the option of protection can have this protection for as long as they work for the Council, irrespective of any job that they move into.
- 2.7 These former RBC staff appointed before 1 April 1998 may alternatively choose to take advantage of the new long service provisions. In this case, they may count any continuous service with the former Berkshire County Council towards their 20 years' service (where this is also continuous with their RBC service).
- 2.8 Where former RBC staff have this option to choose protection or the new provisions, they need to exercise this choice by, at the latest, two years before their 20-year service anniversary.
- 2.9 Retirement awards will no longer be paid (except for former RBC employees appointed before 1 April 1998 who take the protection option).
- 2.10 In these circumstances, the total extra leave which may be accrued in year 20 (either by trading in the long service cash or by banking leave, or a combination of the two) cannot exceed 10 days. The number of, or combination of, banked or traded days is up to the employee (and by agreement of the manager) as long as they do not exceed 10 days.
- 2.11 Former RBC employees who choose to protect their previous long service provisions, including double annual leave, will not be able to bank any extra leave to take in year 20.
- 2.12 Any additional leave as a result of "trading in" should be taken within the 20th anniversary year, as is the case for former RBC employees who protect their previous provisions.

3. Continuous service

- 3.1 The Council will calculate employees' number of years' service from the date of commencement of employment, including any previous service that is regarded as continuous service.
- 3.2 When calculating an employee's number of years' service, the Council will include periods which the employee has spent on maternity, paternity, adoption, ordinary parental leave and shared parental leave, and sabbatical leave. If an employee was dismissed following a disciplinary procedure, appealed the decision to dismiss them and was reinstated, their continuity of service will be preserved for the purpose of this policy.
- 3.3 If an employee left their employment for whatever reason and was re-employed by the Council at a later date, continuity of service is not preserved for the purpose of this policy, unless the break in service is less than one week. The Council will calculate the employee's number of years' service from the date on which their new employment commenced.

- 3.4 Where reference is made to “continuous RBC / BCC service”, this means unbroken service with Reading Borough Council and/or the former Berkshire County Council regardless of when and how the move from one authority to the other was made. For example, joining Reading Borough Council by applying for a job in the normal way, or by transferring to the new Reading Borough Council at or before local government reorganisation by Statutory Transfer Order (STO), Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) or Prior Consideration.

4. Procedure

- 4.1 Where an employee is eligible to receive a long-service award, HR will contact the employee's line manager to confirm the award is due. Then HR will send the employee a letter informing them that they are entitled to receive an award and containing the details of the award.