



**Minehead Town Council
Honorary Bonus, Expenses and
Temporary Responsibility
Allowance (TRA) Payments Policy
Adopted:**

POLICY UPDATE TIMELINE

Policy Number	Version	Owner	Date Published	Review Date	Review Team
TBC	V1	MTC	NA	June 2025	Risk, Policy and Procedures Advisory Group. Town Clerk
TBC	V2	MTC		July 2025	MTC

Distribution:

Internal: All MTC Staff

External: Councillors

Approved:

Introduction

Honoraria and Temporary Responsibility Allowance (TRAs) apply solely to employees below Scale Point 24. Employees on Scale Point 24 and above, are not eligible for honorarium bonus payments.

Councillors are explicitly excluded from any form of honorarium bonus payments.

All staff and Councillors are eligible for approved expenses payments.

Overview

- Honorarium bonus payments permit The Council to occasionally recompense employees for outstanding additional work performed over and above their usual responsibilities.
- Honoraria bonuses are not payments for exceptional performance of usual responsibilities, these are covered by Temporary Responsibility Allowance (TRA).
- Honoraria bonuses are unique, one-off payments paid retrospectively via payroll and subject to appropriate taxation.
- Under normal circumstances members of staff may occasionally provide cover for posts at a higher grade on a temporary basis to ensure service provision is maintained. Where this exceeds a period of one month, the payment of a Temporary Responsibility Allowance (TRA) may be made. A TRA will not normally apply for longer than 12 months.
- A TRA will generally apply when a situation requiring cover arises that has not been planned, for example when a member of staff is on long term sickness absence or as an interim measure in advance of a re-structuring exercise.
- In exceptional circumstances when a Temporary Responsibility Allowance (TRA) is not appropriate an Honorarium bonus may be awarded.
- Employees cannot receive both an honorarium bonus and a TRA allowance.
- Honorarium bonus payments will not under any circumstance, be awarded to Councillors.
- Payments to Councillors are solely limited to expenses, such as fuel costs, transportation and subsistence allowances, which may from time to time be incurred in fulfilling the role of Councillor. (See Mayor, Members employees Expenses Policy)
- Councillor allowances must be in line with Somerset Council's Allowances Policy, relate specifically to travel and subsistence allowances and comply with Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) regulations 2003.

Benefits / Risks

Working with these procedures should:

- Ensure a fair and consistently applied process across the Council that appropriately recognises and rewards individuals and / or teams for exceptional performance.

Non-compliance with these procedures may:

- Result in an inconsistent, and inappropriate, approach to honorarium bonus and TRA payments across the Council.
- Be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Policy

Honorarium bonus payments:

Must:

- Meet both the conditions and limits set out below.
- Will be paid as a one-off lump sum retrospectively through payroll and subject to usual deductions.
- All honoraria bonuses payments must be supported by a written rationale, including the duties performed, confirmation that the payment does not duplicate an expense or existing payment mechanism, and justification for why a TRA allowance is not appropriate.

Must not be paid:

- For work over and above the employee's contracted hours. These should be dealt with as flexitime, time off in lieu or paid in accordance with the prevailing conditions of service for such payments.
- Where an employee is asked to undertake the full duties and responsibilities of a higher graded post this should be addressed by TRA agreement for the relevant period in accordance with the Council's Standard Term and Conditions of Employment.
- Where the ongoing responsibilities of a job change on a permanent or semi-permanent basis the job description should be re-written and sent to an independent Human Resources consultant for evaluation in accordance with the Job Evaluation Maintenance Policy.
- To any Councillor.
- To any staff member whose pay grade exceeds Scale Point 23.
- Honorarium bonus payments must not be artificially divided or split across projects or time periods to circumvent the maximum allowable limit.
- Where work results in travel or material costs, these should be reimbursed separately via The Council's Expenses Policy separately from any TRA or honorarium bonus payment.

Limits:

- Minimum – no minimum limit is proposed.
- Maximum - £500.
- Team honoraria bonuses - the total payment must not exceed the maximum limits per person and typically would be distributed in equal amounts between the group.
- A maximum of one honoraria bonus may be given to one individual or team in a financial year.

Approvals:

- This policy will be reviewed six months after its initial adoption to assess its effectiveness, the number of payments made, the type of work recognised, impact on approved budget lines, changes in relevant legislation, and recommendations from external audits. The outcomes of the review must be reported to Full Council.
- Honorarium bonus recommendations must be documented using a standard internal form retained for audit purposes, and minuted in Full Council minutes.

In all instances Honorarium bonus payments **must:**

- Be applied in accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and Independent Human Resources advice.
- Be recommended to Full Council by The Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- Be recommended by the relevant Line Manager and/or the Clerk and ratified by a resolution at Full Council.
- Be paid retrospectively.
- Be paid within an approved budget.