

**Public**  
**Key Decision - No**

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Leave Arrangements Policy

**Meeting/Date:** Employment Committee – 10 February 2021

**Executive Portfolio:** Cllr David Keane (DK)

**Report by:** Strategic HR Manager (AW)

**Ward(s) affected:** N/A

---

### **Executive Summary:**

The current Leave Arrangements Policy, previously approved June 2015 by Employment committee, needed reviewing to ensure compliance with changing regulations and bring provisions around compassionate leave in line with other employers.

The main reason for the review of this policy was the introduction of Jack's law that came into effect on 6 April 2020, which gave parents a right to Statutory Parental leave. The amended policy has been reviewed and is supported by Senior Leadership Team and Staff Council.

### **Summary of changes**

- 1) **Annual Leave:** Authorisation to carry over Annual leave changed to manager instead of Head of Service
- 2) **NEW parental Bereavement leave** - a legal right to paid bereavement leave (up to 2 weeks) for parents at Statutory Rate of Pay £151.20 per week. In line with our other Statutory 2 weeks' pay offered by the council we would like to pay 1 week 90% pay and 1 week at Stat pay rate (this reflects other two-week stat payments we make).
- 3) **Compassionate leave** expanded to include time off for serious illness of a close relative, partner or dependent and not just Bereavement. Also increasing paid leave from 3 paid days to 5 paid days. (which is the median paid bereavement leave in UK – source CIPD). Removing discretion of Head of Service to pay beyond 3 days.
- 4) **Introducing Phased return from Compassionate leave (in exception);** In certain circumstances **a full return to work** may not be possible for an employee following the death of an immediate relative – for example, when the employee's grief is likely to impact on their ability to perform their role, or where new child care arrangements have to be sourced or responsibility for the care of an elderly parent has transferred to the employee. Working on a part-time or reduced hours basis, or alternative duties may be considered (where practicable), subject to line managers approval; and would be for an agreed maximum number of days and managed in

line with flexible working/part-time working policy, as such employees would be paid only for hours they worked.

These proposed changes to compassionate leave and phased return, are more in line with other organisations and promotes a sensitive and caring employer; also, a better provision may avoid need for paid sick leave.

The Committee is asked to note that in addition to this policy change, Senior leadership team is looking at an exception policy for this year, which will allow special dispensation regarding the carry-over of annual leave to those who have been impacted through work due to covid. This is in line with the amended regulations (The Working Time (Coronavirus)(Amendment) Regulations 2020).

**Recommendation(s):**

The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the Leave Arrangements Policy.

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The report draws Committee attention to Revised Leave Arrangements Policy, that we are seeking endorsement from Committee to introduce.

## **2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The main reason for the review of this policy was the introduction of Jack's law that came into effect on 6 April 2020, which gave parents a right to Statutory Parental leave. The amended policy has been reviewed and is supported by Senior Leadership Team and Staff Council.
- 2.2 These proposed changes to compassionate leave and phased return, are more in line with other organisations and promotes a sensitive and caring employer; also, a better provision may avoid need for paid sick leave.

## **3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS**

Benchmark Research was undertaken by HR team into other employers' practice around Leave and Compassionate Leave.

## **4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS**

The policy changes bring our policy in line with statutory requirements.

## **5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The updated policy will replace the current policy in our employment policies section on Intranet and the forms will be uploaded. Payroll and HR teams will be briefed on the changes to help guide managers and staff.

## **6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

Engaged and Motivated Workforce, as part of Being a More Efficient & Effective council – through updated, clear employment policies.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

Senior Leadership team and Staff Council have been briefed and been given opportunity to review the policy proposed changes and support the changes.

## **8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1 – Leave Arrangements Policy Update Dec 2020

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

Name/Job Title: Aileen Whatmore, Strategic HR Manager  
Tel No: 07596 333940  
Email: [aileen.whatmore@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:aileen.whatmore@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)