

Annex 2

Members' Parental Leave Scheme

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy sets out members' entitlement to maternity, ~~and~~ adoption [and neonatal care](#) leave allowances.
- 1.2 The objective of the policy is to ensure that members are able to take appropriate leave at the time of the child's birth or adoption, [or when the child is receiving neonatal care, that](#) both parents are able to take leave, and that reasonable and adequate arrangements are in place to provide cover for portfolio-holders and others in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) during any period of leave.
- 1.3 Improved provision for new parents will contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of councillors. It will also assist with retaining experienced councillors, particularly women, and making public office more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded.

2 LEAVE PERIODS

- 2.1 Members giving birth are entitled to up to six months' maternity leave from the due date, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement with the relevant Group Leader or, where a member is a Group Leader or is not a member of a political group, the Chair of Council in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.2 Members are entitled to take two weeks' paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following birth.
- 2.3 A member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to six months' adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement with the relevant Group Leader or, where a member is a Group Leader or is not a member of a political group, the Chair of Council in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.4 [If a member is a parent of a baby who requires neonatal care for 7 consecutive days or more within the first 28 days of the baby's life, in addition to the above, they are entitled to up to twelve weeks of neonatal care leave.](#)
- 2.5 Any member who takes leave retains their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six month period unless Council agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period. The normal expectation is that Council will approve an absence period of more than six months.

2.5-6 Any member intending to take [maternal, paternal or adoption](#) leave will be responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant notice requirements of the Council, both in terms of the point at which the leave starts and the point at which they return.

2.6-7 Any member taking leave should ensure that they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible, and they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extension of leave.

3 BASIC ALLOWANCE

3.1 All Members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full whilst on leave.

4 SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

4.1 In line with the GCC staff scheme, members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) shall receive the following:

- Weeks 1 to 6 – 90% of SRA
- Weeks 7 to 18 – 50% of SRA
- Weeks 19 to 52 – no payment but retain the right to return to same position or an alternative position with equivalent status and remuneration.

4.2 [SRAs](#) for up to two weeks' paternity leave will be paid at the full rate.

[4.3 SRAs for neonatal care leave will be paid at the full rate](#)

4.34 In the event of the political control of the Council changing and a member no longer holds the same position, the member's leave will end at that time.

4.45 Where a replacement is appointed to cover the period of absence that member shall receive an SRA for the period of the temporary appointment.

5 RESIGNING FROM OFFICE AND ELECTIONS

5.1 If a member decides not to return at the end of their leave they must notify the Council at the earliest opportunity. All allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.

5.2 If an election is held during the member's leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their Basic Allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the Monday after the election date when they would have left office.

6 REPRESENTATIVE ROLE

- 6.1 Wherever possible, political groups will put arrangements in place to help with casework and related issues.
- 6.2 Democratic Services will provide help and advice where appropriate, and arrange for officers in service areas to respond to enquiries. For example, highways officers will be able to deal with enquiries relating to the condition of local roads or safety concerns.

7 REVIEW

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed to ensure that it continues to reflect the provisions in the relevant policies for Council staff.
- 7.2 Should any dispute arise over the interpretation of this policy, reference will be to the relevant GCC staff policies and the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Section151 Chief Finance Officer, will determine the position.