

PATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY POLICY UPDATE

AGENDA ITEM No. 14

MEETING: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: 21st OCTOBER 2026

REPORTED BY: CORPORATE AND POLICY OFFICER

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request members' approval of the updated Paternity Leave and Pay Policy.
- 1.2 Members are requested to agree changes to the policy to reflect new employment legislation. The main changes reflect eligibility rights from the first day of employment, plus a new section to cover neonatal care leave and pay.
- 1.3 The updated policy is attached at Appendix 1 and the changes highlighted in yellow.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The Paternity Leave and Pay Policy has been updated to reflect new legislation, namely the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 and the Employment Rights Act 2025.

3.0 Current Situation

- 3.1 Under the Employment Rights Act 2025, employees are entitled to request Paternity Leave from the first day of their employment. However, it should be noted that Statutory Paternity Pay still requires an applicant to have been employed by the same employer for at least 26 weeks up to the qualifying week.
- 3.2 The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 entitles eligible working parents to additional time off if their baby needs neonatal care. This is a day one right. However, to be eligible for neonatal care pay, employees must have 26 weeks of continuous service.
- 3.3 Opportunity has also been taken to update and clarify the requirements for adoption leave.

4.0 Impact on Great Aycliffe Town Council

- 4.1 Paternity and neonatal care leave are statutory rights under employment law and the Council is required to comply with this.

5.0 Policy Implications

- 5.1 This report complies with the Council's Strategic Aim No. 1:
To provide good quality governance and management of the Council.

6.0 Staffing Implications

- 6.1 It is considered that paternity leave and neonatal care leave do not have any undue impact on staffing levels.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no additional financial implications.

8.0 Crime and Disorder Implications

- 8.1 None.

9.0 Equal Opportunity Implications

- 9.1 All employees are entitled to request Paternity or Neonatal Care Leave from the first day of their employment.
- 9.2 By law, employees must not be disadvantaged in any way in their employment as a result of taking or requesting Paternity or Neonatal Care Leave.

10.0 Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Change Implications

- 10.1 None.

11.0 Risk Assessment

- 11.1 It is not considered that the matter contained in this report poses a risk to health and safety of staff or to the financial or public standing of the Council to a degree that a risk assessment should be appended to this report.

12.0 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

- 12.1 Is any personal or sensitive data required for this proposal which may have any implications for GDPR? **No**

13.0 Recommendations

- 13.1 It is recommended that Members:
- i) Receive the report.
 - ii) Agree the amendments to the Paternity Leave and Pay Policy.