

SPECIAL LEAVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



For Approval

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Authority's Special Leave Policy attached as Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the Authority's Special Leave Policy attached as Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In light of statutory changes to the Carers Act (2023), which came into effect 6th April 2024, we have reviewed our existing arrangements in relation to Special Leave Policy and Procedure.
- 3.2 Specially, the Act includes a new statutory leave entitlement that grants up to one week of unpaid carer's leave per year to employees who are caring for a dependant with a long-term care need which is defined as:
- A physical or mental illness or injury that means they are expected to need care for more than 3 months
 - A disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010)
 - Care needs because of their old age

4. SPECIAL LEAVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The revised Special Leave Policy and Procedure is attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.2 Section 1 sets out the scope of the policy which has been amended to signpost other relevant policies and procedures relating to types of leave and absences. This section also includes the definition of what is meant by the term 'special leave'.
- 4.3 The Authority's role is presented at Section 2.
- 4.4 Communications to employees regarding the changes to the Special Leave policy and procedure will be communicated via the usual routes which include Comms Forum and publication on the Key Document Framework located on 'The Bridge'.

- 4.5 The Fire Brigade's Union and UNISON have been consulted on this Policy and Procedure and to date no issues have been raised.
- 4.6 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the implementation of this and no issues have been identified that would negatively impact any protected characteristic group.

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