

Somerset Council

Human Resources Committee  
26<sup>th</sup> March 2024

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### Somerset Council Employment Policy for Approval

Executive Member: Theo Butt Philip Lead Member for Transformation and Human Resources

Lead Officer: Dawn Bettridge, Service Director - Workforce

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	<b>Seen by:</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Report Sign off</b>	Legal	Jill Byron	10/3/24
	Corporate Finance	Nicola Hix	4/3/24
	Human Resources	Dawn Bettridge	1/3/24
	Executive Member	Cllr Theo Butt Philip	11/3/24
	Monitoring Officer	David Clark	14/03/24
	<b>Summary:</b>	This report details the proposed new Carer's Leave Policy, which meets the requirements of the Carer's Leave Act 2023, due to be implemented on 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2024.	
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>The members of the HR Committee are asked to formally approve the attached new Carer's Leave policy.</b>		
<b>Reasons for Recommendations:</b>	To ensure that Somerset Council meets its legal obligations under the Carer's Leave Act 2023 by setting out clearly how Carer's Leave will be implemented.  Somerset Council recognises the increasing number of employees who have caring responsibilities and this policy aims to support them with a clear process for requesting carer's leave.		
<b>Links to Priorities and Impact on Service Plans:</b>	A core function & priority of the HR Policy team is to ensure that HR policies are legally compliant.		
<b>Financial, Legal and HR Implications:</b>	<b>Financial</b> – there are no financial implications as Carer's Leave is unpaid.  <b>HR</b> – having a clear policy on the Council's approach to Carer's Leave ensures that employees understand their entitlements and the support available to them.		

	<b>Legal-</b> the Carer's Leave policy is written in line with the Carer's Leave Act 2023 to ensure that it is legally compliant.
<b>Equalities Implications:</b>	The Council's duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is to have "due regard" to the matters set out in relation to equalities when considering and making decisions. An equalities impact assessment has been completed for this policy.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	N/A
<b>Scrutiny comments / recommendation (if any):</b>	N/A

## 1 Background

- 1.1 The Carer's Leave Act 2023 will introduce a new statutory right for employees, effective from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024. This is a new right to five days' unpaid leave per year (pro rata), for employees who have a dependent with a long-term care need.
- 1.2 Carer's Leave will be a day one employment right and employees will not need to provide evidence of caring responsibilities. Further detail on the criteria and process is contained in the policy at appendix 1.

## 2 Options Considered

- 2.1 An alternative option would be to not implement a policy. This option is discounted for two reasons. Firstly, having a policy sets out clearly that the Council has recognised and implemented the legislation. Secondly, it supports consistent and fair application of Carer's Leave, assisting employees in understanding the support that is available to them and how to access this.

## 3 Consultations Undertaken

- 3.1 This policy has been informally consulted upon with trade unions and will also be presented to the March meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum for final, formal approval. Should this result in any changes, HR Committee will be updated.

## 4 Implications

- 4.1 No further implications.

## 5 Background Papers

- 5.1 Appendix 1 - Carer's Leave Policy