SEAVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Paternity Leave and Pay Policy

Purpose and scope
The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide clear information about our paternity provisions. This document sets out our policy on paternity leave and pay.
Immediately you discover your partner is pregnant, you should make the council aware so that you can be briefed on your entitlements. Ordinary paternity leave is also available to adoptive parents (either the adoptive father or the adoptive mother) where a child is matched or newly placed with them for adoption.

Eligibility
To qualify for ordinary paternity leave and pay, you will need to have at least 26 weeks service by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC) or ending with the week in which you were notified of having been matched with the child. You must also have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child.

Ante-natal appointments
An expectant father or the partner (including same sex) of a pregnant woman is entitled to take unpaid time off work to accompany the woman to up to 2 of her ante-natal appointments. The time off is capped at six and a half hours for each appointment. “Partner” includes the spouse or civil partner of the pregnant woman and a person (of either sex) in a long-term relationship with her. The right applies whether the child is conceived naturally or through donor insemination. It also extends to those who will become parents through a surrogacy arrangement if they expect to satisfy the conditions, and intend to apply, for a Parental Order for the child born through that arrangement.

Employees who are adopting a child are entitled to take time off to attend adoption appointments. Please see the Adoption Policy for full details.

You should endeavour to give the council as much notice as possible of when you need the time off for the antenatal appointment. We may ask you for a declaration stating the date and time of the appointment and that you qualify for the unpaid time off through your relationship with the mother or child, and that the time off is for the purpose of attending an ante-natal appointment with the expectant mother that has been made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, nurse or midwife.

Ordinary Paternity Leave (OPL)
An employee whose partner gives birth to a child, or who is the biological father or either adoptive parent of the child, is entitled to two weeks' ordinary paternity leave. OPL can commence from the date of the child’s birth, or child’s placement with the adopter, or within 56 days of the birth or date of placement. If the child is born early, OPL may be taken between the date of birth and up to the 56th day after the EWC.

Ordinary Paternity Leave must be taken in a single block of one or two weeks within eight weeks of the birth or adoption of the child. Only one period of leave is available to employees irrespective of whether more than one child is born as the result of the same pregnancy.

If you choose to start your OPL on a fixed and predetermined date and the child is not born or placed for adoption by that date, you must change the date you want to start your leave and notify us in writing as soon as you reasonably can. If you take both OPL and shared parental leave you must take ordinary paternity leave first.

Notification of Ordinary Paternity Leave

You must inform the council in writing of your intention to take OPL by the end of the qualifying week, unless this is not reasonably practicable. You must tell us:

- The week the baby is due,
- Whether you wish to take one or two weeks' leave, and,
- When you want your leave to start.

In the case of an adopted child, you must give notice of your intention to take ordinary paternity leave no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given by the adoption agency. The notice must specify the date the child is expected to be placed for adoption, the date you intend to start ordinary paternity leave, the length of the intended ordinary paternity leave period and the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched with the child.

You can change your mind about the date on which you want the leave to start providing you tell your manager at least 28 days in advance (unless this is not reasonably practicable).

Ordinary Statutory Paternity Pay (OSPP)

You will qualify for OSPP if your weekly earnings in the 8 weeks up to and including the Qualifying Week (QW) are not less than the lower earnings limit for the payment of National Insurance contributions. The QW is 15 weeks before the baby is due or the week during which you are notified of being matched with a child for adoption.

Paternity leave will be paid at the prevailing rate of SPP or 90% of average weekly earnings if this figure is less than OSPP.

Shared Parental Leave (SPL)

The birth mother or primary adopter is entitled to curtail their maternity/adoption leave and pay and instead take SPL and pay in conjunction with the child's father (in the case of birth) or the spouse, civil partner or partner of the child's mother/adopter, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria. SPL enables parents to choose how to share the care of their child during the first year of birth. Its purpose is to give parents more flexibility in considering how to best care for, and bond with, their child. See the Shared Parental Leave Policy.

Pay increases awarded during paternity leave

We will ensure that whilst you are on PL you are not left out of a pay award which you would ordinarily have been entitled to. This means that if we make a pay award which takes effect during your PL, then when you return to work, you will return to the 'new' rate of pay that applies to the job you are returning to.

Returning to work

On resuming work after PL, you are entitled to return to the same job as you occupied before commencing paternity leave on the same terms and conditions of employment as if you had not been absent.

Requesting a change to your pattern of work
You have the right to request that the organisation considers changing your pattern of work (subject to eligibility criteria). See the Flexible Working Policy.

Additional paternity leave
Additional paternity leave is available to eligible employees who may take up to 26 weeks' unpaid additional paternity leave within the first year of their child's life provided that the mother has returned to work.

Data protection
When managing your paternity leave and pay, we will process personal data collected in accordance with the data protection policy. Personal and or sensitive information is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, staff who need to manage paternity leave and pay. Inappropriate access or disclosure of personal data would breach our data protection policy and should be reported immediately. A data breach may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Date Adopted	19th May 2026
Next Review Date	Annually in May