



# SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

## Parental Leave Policy

### AIMS OF THE POLICY

Parental leave is a right to take time off work on an unpaid basis to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare. Parents can use it to spend some time with children and strike a better balance between their work and family commitments.

### ELIGIBILITY

Both mothers and fathers, whether they are the natural or adoptive parents, can qualify for parental leave. They must either be named on the child's birth certificate or they must have, or expect to have, parental responsibility for the child.

The parents of a child do not need to be living with the child in order to qualify for parental leave.

Individuals who want to take parental leave must have continuous local government service for a period of one year by the time they want to take the leave. Parents can take leave up to their child's fifth birthday.

The parent/carer must be allowed to return to the same job as they left, however this can be an equivalent post if they have taken more than four weeks at once.

Members of staff who are adopting a child will be entitled to take parental leave because they will have parental responsibility when they adopt. Parents of adopted children are entitled to take up to 13 weeks unpaid parental leave (provided they have at least one year's service), up to five years following the placement or up to the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday if that is sooner.

Parents of disabled children are entitled to parental leave up to their child's 18th birthday.

### PROVISIONS

Each parent can take 13 weeks parental leave for each child. This means that both mothers and fathers, if they have twins or adopt more than one child at a time, can take 13 weeks' leave for each child.

One week's leave must be taken in blocks or multiples of 1 week.

Parents of disabled children can take 18 weeks' parental leave for each disabled child born or adopted. This leave can be taken in blocks of multiples of one day.

One week's parental leave is equal to the length of time that an employee is normally required to work in a week. This means that a week's leave for a member of staff who usually works from Monday to Friday is equal to five days, while for an employee who works Mondays and Tuesdays only, a week's leave is equal to two days.

In exceptional circumstances the Town Council may grant parental leave over and above the 13 or 18 weeks' statutory entitlement and this will be agreed on a case by case basis.

## **APPLICATION**

The legislation governing parental leave states that 21 days' notice of intention to take parental leave must be given. In exceptional circumstances this may not be practical and therefore the Town Council will endeavour to be as flexible as possible and not unreasonably withhold parental leave that is requested with less than 21 days' notice. Requests should be put in writing and made to the individual's line manager, with a copy being sent to the HR team. The HR team will then be able to keep a record of parental leave taken by each individual.

## **POSTPONING PARENTAL LEAVE**

Managers may postpone requests for parental leave when there is a genuine service difficulty in granting leave at that time. The line manager must respond to the request in writing within 7 days of receipt. The letter must explain why it is operationally difficult to approve the leave and suggest a more convenient time when the leave could be taken.

Postponed leave may not be deferred any later than 6 months from the original commencement date.

Leave to be with a dependant giving birth or to adopt a child cannot be postponed.

<b>Approved by Personnel Committee</b>	<b>7 December 2023</b>
<b>Adopted by Council</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	