

Appendix 5a – Parental Leave Policy Procedure

Procedure for Elected Members Taking Parental Leave

The steps outlined below, set out the procedure for an elected member who would like to request Parental Leave as per the Parental Leave Policy for Members (2020).

1. Make formal notification (in writing) to appropriate Group Leader to have period of absence covered by the Policy.

Application should state:

- Reason for leave notification i.e.
 - Maternity¹
 - Paternity²
 - Adoption³
 - Shared Parental Leave⁴
 - Parental Leave⁵
- Expected duration of absence in weeks (and expected return date)

2. Group Leader to acknowledge notification for leave (within 3 working days)

Group Leader forwards **notification** to Member and Democratic Services (MaDS)

3. MaDS office arrange meeting⁶ as appropriate (to take place as practicable as possible) between:

- Leader of the Council
- Representative of Senior Leadership Team
- Other Party Group Leader (should the request come from a member of that Group)

Meeting takes place to:

- Consider notification
- Initial discussion on who will pick up duties whilst elected member is taking parental leave
- Address any other matters arising from elected member's leave including support that may be required



4. The elected member should, ahead of leave start date:

- Set up an out of office message within Outlook⁷
- Include details of who will pick up constituency casework (will usually be an elected member from within same district/borough)⁸
- If in receipt of SRA, the elected member should agree with the Leader of the Council, or Leader of the Opposition, as appropriate who will take on SRA position responsibilities. The general guiding principles are:
 - Cabinet Member responsibilities will pass to Cabinet colleague
 - Cabinet Support Member responsibilities will pass to appropriate Cabinet Member
 - Committee Chairman responsibilities will pass to appointed Vice Chairman
 - Leader of the Opposition responsibilities will pass to Deputy Leader of the Opposition
 - Deputy Leader of the Opposition responsibilities will pass to nominated opposition member
 - Opposition Vice Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee responsibilities will pass to nominated opposition elected member
 - Notify MaDS of arrangements

5. MaDS to inform relevant officers of arrangements:

- Senior and Wider Leadership Team
- Chairmen of appropriate committees
- Communications Team

¹ S4 of MAPP Policy

² S47 of MAPP Policy

³ S18.2 and 22.1 of MAPP Policy

⁴ S30.1 of MAPP Policy

⁵ S51 of MAPP Policy

⁶ Or telephone conference call if deemed more appropriate i.e. leave is requested is of a sensitive nature

⁷ Template to be provided by MaDS

⁸ Expected that the member taking leave will consult with Group Leader and designated 'cover' to agree



6. When to apply

Type of Leave	When	Maximum duration of leave permitted
Maternity	<p>By the end of the 15th week before their expected week of childbirth (EWC) or as soon as is reasonably practicable of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that they are pregnant; • of the expected week of childbirth (EWC); • of the date their maternity leave will begin. This cannot be earlier than the beginning of the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth. 	Up to 52 weeks 'leave' away from their member duties after the birth of their child in the child's first year.
Paternity	<p>Before the 15th week before the baby is expected or in the case of adoption within 7 days of being notified that a child has been matched, unless it is not reasonably practicable, you must inform your manager in writing of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That you intend to take paternity leave the week the baby is due/or in the case of adoption the week the child is expected to be placed for adoption and the date when you were notified that you were matched with a child for adoption; • Whether you wish to take one or two weeks leave; and • When you want the leave to start 	Up to 2 weeks 'leave' away from their duties after the birth of their child

⁹ You can change your mind about the start date of leave provided you give your Group Leader at least 28 days notice, unless this is not reasonably practicable.

Type of Leave	When	Maximum duration of leave permitted
Shared Parental Leave	At least 8 weeks before date of leave	Up to 50 weeks 'leave' away from their member duties, less any time the mother of the newborn child has taken maternity leave (minimum of two weeks must be taken by mother).



7. Returning to Office¹⁰

If an elected member is returning to their duties at the end of their full maternity / adoption / shared parental leave entitlement they will not have to give any further notification to their Group Leader.

It will be assumed that the elected member is returning to their duties at the end of their maternity/adoption / shared parental leave on the date previously notified.

If the elected member intends to return early, they should provide 8 weeks' notice, otherwise they simply return at the end of the period.

8. What if leave period falls across administration period i.e. County Council Election?

If, when the application for leave is being made, it becomes apparent that the duration of leave takes place over the next County Council Election, it will be assumed that the leave period will cease on the final date of the administration unless re-elected¹¹.

¹⁰ S41 of MAPP Policy

¹¹ By way of an example, the term of office for 2017-2021 expires on Thursday 6th May 2021

