



MERSEYSIDE WASTE DISPOSAL AUTHORITY

**WORK LIFE BALANCE
POLICY**

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Issue: 02

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority is committed to providing equal employment opportunities and to supporting staff in balancing domestic and work commitments.

This policy details the support available through work life balance policies, and all applications for such practices will be subject to the needs of the service, these employment practices are open to all employees.

The Authority believes that the range of policies it provides:

- Helps employees to maintain a balance between work and home commitments
- Helps in developing a culture where the needs of the employees to balance work and life commitments are recognised
- Helps in the recruitment and retention of employees
- Promotes Equal Opportunities

- 1.2 Work life balance is a term used to apply to all staff who work in Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority and who are seeking to achieve a balance between their home and working lives. Throughout their career in the Authority individuals will have differing demands on their time and energies at home as well as work.

These demands may be due to:

- Pursuing educational or professional opportunities
- Parental responsibilities
- Caring for others including dependants
- Short or longer term domestic difficulties
- The need or desire to have different or flexible working patterns at different stages of a career or life.

- 1.3 All employees can request, in writing to their Section Manager, that their post be considered for work life practices outlined within this

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policy. The employee will receive a written reply from the Manager stating whether their request can be supported or not.

- 1.4 In principle, all posts could be eligible for work life balance and all applications will be carefully considered against the needs of the service and a decision will be given to the employee in writing. Any appeals from employees in respect of the application of this policy will be dealt with in line with the Authority's Grievance Procedure.

2. ADOPTION LEAVE

- 2.1 An employee who is adopting a child will be granted leave under this arrangement. This policy applies to adoption (normally from outside the family unit) only, and does not include fostering.
 - 2.2 This policy is designed to enable adopting parents to spend time with the children when it is most needed, i.e. when the child(ren) first joins the family unit rather than when adoption becomes legal.
 - 2.3 Both paid adoption leave and paid paternity leave are available to employees where an adoption agency notifies the adopter of a match with a child on or after 1st April 2007.
 - 2.4 To qualify for adoption leave, an employee must:
 - Have been formally notified that they have been *newly matched with a child for adoption by an adoption agency.
 - Have worked continuously for the Authority for 26 weeks ending with the week in which they are notified of being match with a child for adoption.
- * (Adoption leave and pay is not available in circumstances where a child is not newly matched for adoption, for example when a step-parent is adopting a partner's children)*
- 2.5 Employees are entitled to up to 26 weeks' ordinary adoption leave followed immediately by up to 26 weeks' additional adoption leave – a total of 52 weeks' leave. Ordinary adoption leave is paid leave (see 2.9 below).
 - 2.6 Adoption Leave can start from the date of the child's placement or from a fixed date which can be up to 14 days before the expected date of placement.

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- 2.7 Only one period of leave is available irrespective of whether more than one child is placed for adoption as part of the same arrangement.
- 2.8 If the child's placement ends during the adoption leave period, the employee can continue adoption leave for up to eight weeks after the end of placement.
- 2.9 During their adoption leave, Statutory Adoption Pay is paid for up to 26 weeks. The rate of Statutory Adoption pay is the same as the standard rate of Statutory Maternity Pay.
- 2.10 Employees are required to inform the Authority of their intention to take adoption leave within 7 days of being notified by their adoption agency that they have been matched with a child for adoption, unless that is not reasonably practicable. The employee should put in writing to their Line Manager the date that the child will be placed for adoption; the Line Manager will then inform the Assistant Corporate Services Manager at the earliest convenience.
- 2.11 Employees must give the Authority documentary evidence (original Matching Certificate) – from their adoption agency as evidence of their entitlement to Statutory Adoption Pay and Adoption Leave.
- 2.12 The Authority will confirm in writing the start date of the adoption leave, adoption pay entitlements, any annual leave you may be taking at the beginning and end of your adoption leave, how much annual leave you will accrue whilst on adoption leave and when your planned return to work date will be.
- 2.13 During any additional adoption leave, the employment contract continues.
- 2.14 Employees who intend to return to work at the end of their full adoption leave entitlement do not have to give any further notification to the Authority. However, those employees who want to return to work **before** the end of their adoption leave period must give the Authority 28 day's notice in writing of the date they intend to return, or less at the discretion of the Chief Executive in consideration of the needs of the service.
- 2.15 In line with maternity regulations employees must return to work for 3 months at the end of the leave period or they will be required to repay the 6 weeks paid leave.

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3. PARENTAL LEAVE

- 3.1 Parental leave is available to employees who have parental responsibility for a child or children born or adopted after 15th December 1999 who wish to take leave to care for the child(ren).
- 3.2 Employees are entitled to 13 Weeks unpaid leave (proportionately reduced for part-timers), to be taken up to five years from the date of birth or in cases of adoption five years from the date of placement (or the child's 18th birthday, if that is sooner).

Parents of disabled children are entitled to 18 weeks' parental leave up to the child's 18th birthday, providing they have the qualifying length of service.
- 3.3 Employees requesting parental leave must have a minimum of one year's continuous service with the Authority.
- 3.4 Both male and female employees are eligible to parental leave which is additional to maternity and paternity leave.
- 3.5 Employees must give written notice 21 days before their intention to take parental leave. Applications for parental leave should be discussed with and agreed by the individual's Line Manager before being passed on to the Assistant Corporate Services Manager. A Manager can postpone the leave within one week of receiving a request from the employee for up to six months if the needs of the service dictate this.
- 3.6 If it is necessary to postpone the leave, the Manager will discuss this with the employee and will give notice of the postponement to the employee in writing no later than 7 days after the employee's notice to take leave was submitted. The manager should give to the employee the reasons for the postponement and set out the new dates of parental leave. The length of leave granted should be equivalent to that requested originally by the employee.
- 3.7 Parental leave must be taken in blocks of at least one week, for example, if 8 days are requested and the individual works a 5 day week this will be logged as 2 weeks' parental leave; however the unpaid entitlement will be 8 days.
- 3.8 The maximum leave to be taken within each year is limited to four weeks.

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4. PATERNITY LEAVE

- 4.1 Paternity leave is available to fathers of newborn children. Fathers are entitled to two weeks' paid paternity leave. This is in addition to the current right of 13 weeks' parental leave. Eligible employees can choose to take a single block of either one week or two week's ordinary paternity leave (OPL). They cannot take it as odd days or as two separate weeks.
- 4.2 Paternity leave is available to an employee who has continuous service with the Authority of at least 26 weeks by the 15th week before the Expected Week of Confinement (EWC).
- 4.3 Paternity leave will only be granted on the production of a MAT B1 certificate (or copy) or a letter from your partner's midwife confirming the due date. Paternity should be applied for, provisionally, as early as possible and not normally later than eight weeks before the EWC.
- 4.4 The leave must be taken within a period of 56 days, beginning with the date on which the child is born.

ADDITIONAL PATERNITY LEAVE

- 4.5 Additional paternity leave allows employees who are eligible to take up to 26 weeks/6 months leave to care for their new baby.
- 4.6 Additional paternity leave and pay may be available if:
 - 1) you are the father of a child due on or after 3rd April 2011
 - 2) your wife, partner or civil partner is pregnant and due to give birth to a child on or after 3rd April 2011
 - 3) you and your partner receive notification that you are matched with a child for adoption on or after 3rd April 2011
 - 4) your wife, partner or civil partner is adopting a child from overseas and the child enters Great Britain on or after 3rd April 2011
 - 5) the child's mother is entitled to statutory maternity pay or allowance or statutory adoption leave or pay.
- 4.7 Additional paternity leave is for a maximum of 26 weeks. Leave can be taken any time from 20 weeks after the child is born, but it must have finished by the child's first birthday. In the case of adoption it can **start** anytime between 20 weeks and 52 weeks after the child starts living with the adopter.

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- 4.8 To qualify for additional paternity leave and pay, the Authority must receive notice in writing from the employee at least eight weeks before the start of the leave and must include: The expected date of birth or date of notified of being matched for adoption, the actual date of birth or placement of adoption, the start date of the additional paternity leave and pay and the relationship to the mother and that the leave is taken to care for the child.
- 4.9 For additional paternity leave to be taken the child's mother or adopter must have returned to work. Periods of annual leave, sick leave or parental leave which directly follows maternity or adoption leave will not count as a return to work.

5. MATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY

- 5.1 A pregnant employee is entitled to take reasonable time off during their normal working hours to receive antenatal care; this must be agreed with their line manager. Antenatal care includes appointments with the GP and hospital clinics.
- 5.2 The employee should advise their line manager of the intended absence as far in advance of the appointment as possible, they may be asked to produce their appointment card.
- 5.3 There will be no deduction of salary for attendance at authorised antenatal appointments.
- 5.4 Pregnant employees are entitled to take 26 weeks' maternity leave, regardless of their length of employment with the Authority, this is known as Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) (subject to the rules set out in 5.7 below)
- 5.5 If an employee has 26 weeks' service at the start of the 15th week before the expected week of the birth, they will be able to take an additional period of maternity leave, this is known as Additional Maternity Leave (AML). The 26 weeks' additional leave will start from the end of the 26 week period of ordinary maternity leave.
- 5.6 The combination of 26 Weeks of Ordinary Maternity Leave and 26 weeks of Additional Maternity Leave (making one year in total) weeks is known as Statutory Maternity Leave.

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- 5.7 Maternity pay is payable to those employees who have 26 weeks' service at the start of the 15th week before the expected week of the birth. Maternity pay as followed:
- For the first six weeks, 90% of the employees weekly average earnings
 - For the remaining 12 weeks, half of the employees weekly average earnings
 - Statutory Maternity Pay for the remaining weeks.
- 5.8 A pregnant employee can choose to start their maternity leave at any time after the start of the 11th week before the week in which the child is due except in the following cases:
- If the employee is absent because of an illness related to the pregnancy at any time during the four weeks before the child is due, the Authority reserves the right to require the employee to start their maternity leave on the first day of absence.
 - If the child is born earlier than the planned date of starting the maternity leave then the maternity leave starts on the day the child is born.
- 5.9 A pregnant employee must take at least two weeks' leave at the time of the birth.
- 5.10 The employee must give notice in writing addressed to their line manager at least 28 days before they start their maternity leave stating:
- (a) that they are pregnant
 - (b) the week in which the child is due
 - (c) whether they intend to take ordinary maternity leave (OML) only or additional maternity leave(AML) in addition
 - (d) when they want their maternity leave to start

The employee should also enclose the original maternity certificate (form MAT B1) signed by their GP or midwife with the letter.

After receiving her notification the Authority will confirm in writing the maternity leave dates, maternity pay entitlements, any annual leave she is taking at the beginning and end of the maternity leave, how much annual leave will be accrued during the maternity leave and the planned return to work date. She must also be notified of the date on which her SML will end.

- 5.11 If the employee wishes to return to work before the end of their maternity leave period they must notify their line manager in writing, giving at least 28 days advanced warning of the date of return. The Line Manager must inform the Assistant Corporate Services Manager at the earliest convenience.
- 5.12 If the employee decides not to return to work at the end of their maternity leave period, they must notify their line manager at once in writing who will then inform the Assistant Corporate Services Manager.

6. EMPLOYMENT BREAK POLICY

- 6.1 Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority acknowledges that employees may find it necessary to have a break from work for domestic or personal reasons, approved by a manager, on an individual basis. Appropriate reasons include the care of children or dependant relatives or other domestic situations. Other appropriate reasons will be considered.
- 6.2 A career break is a formal arrangement between the individual and Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority for an extended period of unpaid absence from employment, involving an understanding on both sides that the employee will return to employment at the end of the agreed time period. This policy should be regarded as a broad framework enabling Managers to meet the needs of their own section and staff.
- 6.3 Potentially, all employees of Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority are eligible to apply for a career break providing the meet the following criteria:
 - One year's continuous service with Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority
 - Have applied for an employment break in writing normally giving three months notice prior to the start of the requested break.
 - Have given a written undertaking to remain with Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority as follows

For an unpaid period of absence of three months to one year – at least six months after return.

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For an unpaid period of absence of one to three years – at least one year after return.

- 6.4 Each applicant's request will be considered on an individual basis. Managers should consider the following aspects when a request is received:
 - The needs of the service
 - length of service
 - current and anticipated skill shortages
 - ability to guarantee re-employment in same or similar post
 - ability to continue to provide the service
- 6.5 The length of any career break is subject to the agreement between managers and the individual employee, and will be between three months and three years. There will be a minimum requirement of two years service between each break.
- 6.6 The length of any career break should ensure that the needs of the service continue to be met.
- 6.7 If the circumstances of the career break change, the policy does allow for employees to apply for an extension of their break, or to return early, with the appropriate notice, subject to the needs of the service. The period of notice may be mutually negotiated in appropriate circumstances but may be varied at the discretion of the Authority.
- 6.8 Where the employee requires less than three months time off, the use of family leave, annual leave and unpaid leave should be considered.
- 6.9 Consideration will be given by the manager to any request for an unpaid period of absence of over three months and up to three years, the decision being based on 6.3 and 6.4 above.
- 6.10 Managers should consider requests positively wherever possible. After considering the request, managers should make a recommendation to the relevant Director to approve the request or not. The decision will be communicated in writing and will specify whether the request has been granted. .
- 6.11 To assist in arriving at their decision managers /Directors may wish to consider some or all of the following:
 - the needs of the service

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- ability to recruit a temporary replacement on a fixed term temporary or secondment basis
 - any financial implications
 - the needs of the employee.
- 6.12 Where the request is accepted a written agreement will be completed by the manager, signed by both parties and countersigned by the Director (See Appendix 1). The agreement reflects that the employee will be re-employed at the end of the period **in the same or an equivalent post, at the same grade and salary point** as before the period.
- 6.13 Managers must seek the advice of the Assistant Corporate Services Manager as soon as they receive an application for a career break.
- 6.14 Before commencing a career break, employees should ensure that they fully understand all the implications in doing so.
- 6.15 Employees entering into a career break under this policy must ensure that any changes to their personal circumstances are notified to their manager as soon as possible.
- 6.16 Employees are required to keep in regular contact with the workplace. Details of such contact will be agreed with the manager prior to the period of absence, and must include the following:
- an appropriate number of days paid work, which should be no less than 10 days per year. Payment will be made at the same pay point enjoyed by the employee prior to commencing their career break
 - attending the appropriate training, updates and briefings
 - receiving policies, procedures, notes of meetings etc
 - meeting with their manager and colleagues at appropriate intervals
- 6.17 It should be noted that, where appropriate, it is the employee's own responsibility to attend any compulsory training/refresher course to maintain full competence.
- 6.18 To ensure that the implications of a career break, including pension arrangements are clear to both the manager and employee, no decision will be given until the full implications of entering into a career break have been fully discussed with the Assistant Corporate Services Manager.

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- 6.19 It is also the duty of the managers to keep employees informed of changes with the Authority by regular contact. If organisational changes occur, the Authority will ensure that, where possible, employees taking a career break are involved in any consultations on the same basis as all other affected employees.
- 6.20 Managers will inform the employee of training and development requirements throughout the career break and ensure that they are met. Managers in conjunction with the Assistant Corporate Services Manager are responsible for all aspects of administration of the career break.
- 6.21 Employees are required to give a minimum of three months notice, in writing, to their manager, who will then inform the Assistant Corporate Services Manager of their intention to return to work. If a return date is agreed by the Authority, three months notice from the amended date must be given.
- 6.22 The manager will hold an interview with the employee to discuss details of the return to work. Applications to return to work on different terms of employment e.g. part-time or job share will be considered by managers according to the needs of the service.
- 6.23 The return to work may be considered on a part-time or job share basis
- 6.24 The return to work will be subject to a medical clearance by the Authority's Medical Officer.
- 6.25 If the employee fails to comply with the agreed arrangements for the career break, the manager may cancel the arrangements in writing, after giving the employee the opportunity to explain the situation.

6.26 **GENERAL CONDITIONS**

Remuneration: There will be no entitlement to pay during the period of absence, except when returning to work during the break for updating or training requirements. Those employees receiving increments will be paid on the same incremental point on return to work, as that applicable at the start of the period of absence.

Break in Service: The period of absence will not be regarded as a break in service. It will however, not count as reckonable service, except for any paid employment during the period.

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Therefore, the accrual of enhanced conditions of service will not be affected, but the period of absence will not count towards pensionable service, in the calculation of redundancy payments, or maternity leave rights. Employees may wish to seek advice from the Pension Fund regarding pensionable entitlements.

Sick Leave/Annual Leave: These do not accrue during the period of leave.

National Insurance Contributions: These will only be paid by the Authority during the period of absence when work is actually undertaken for the Authority.

Allowances: Allowances such as essential car user and telephone user allowance will cease during the period of absence.

Car Loans: The following options will be discussed with the employee in liaison with the Assistant Corporate Services Manager and the Finance Director:

- Payment of the outstanding loan in full
- Possible suspension of payments for the duration of the career break
- Continuation of normal loan repayments

6.27 While every effort will be made to accommodate appropriate applications, having regard to the exigencies of the service, it may not be possible to approve applications for a career break. However, should any member of staff consider that their application has been unfairly dealt with they are entitled to pursue the matter through the Authority's grievance procedure. They may wish to consult with their trade union representative for advice before doing so.

7. ADDITIONAL LEAVE

7.1 Additional leave with or without pay may be granted in special circumstances at the discretion of the Chief Executive. Requests for such leave must be made, in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive.

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7.2 Details of the special circumstances in which leave may be granted are as follows:-

- **Leave for urgent personal reasons**

The Chief Executive shall have discretion to grant up to five days special leave for unforeseen urgent personal reasons. Normally the period of absence should not exceed five days with and five days without pay in any one leave year. In particular circumstances the period of leave can be extended beyond the 10 days by the Chief Executive

- **Leave for attendance at Court as a Witness**

An employee who is required to attend Court in the capacity of a witness outside the course of their normal duty shall be granted special leave with pay. Any witness fee (as distinct from expenses, must be paid to the Authority)

- **Leave for Jury Service**

When an employee is summoned for Jury Service it is his/her public and legal duty to attend, leave with pay will automatically be granted to the employee for the duration of the jury service. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Chief Executive agree to recommend to the summoning authority that the summons should be postponed or cancelled. If an employee is not required to appear on a particular day/part-day, they should report for work as normal.

- **Leave for Magisterial Duties**

Leave with pay shall be granted to employees undertaking magisterial duties.

- **Leave to stand as a Candidate in a Parliamentary Election**

Leave with pay shall be granted, up to a maximum of 20 days, to an employee standing as a candidate in a Parliamentary (including European Parliament) Election.

- **Leave to serve as a Member of Another Local Authority**

Leave with pay shall be granted to an employee performing approved duties as a member of another local authority. No deduction will be made from the salary of employees concerned.

- **Leave to serve in the Community**

The Chief Executive has discretion to grant leave to an employee who acts in a voluntary capacity as a school governor or as a member of other statutory bodies. Applications for this should be made in writing to the Chief Executive, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis according to the needs of the service.

- **Election Duties**

The Chief Executive has discretion to grant leave with pay from normal duties may be granted where employees are appointed by returning officers to assist at any Elections and Referenda.

- **Reserve Forces Annual Training Camps**

Two weeks leave with pay will be granted for attendance at annual training camps.

- **Special leave for Trade Union Purposes**

All applications for leave for this purpose will be determined by the Chief Executive who has discretion to grant leave with pay on the following basis:-

- i) Leave with pay may be granted to enable employees to attend appropriate meeting of bodies set up by Trade Unions for the purpose of research or the further advancement of knowledge.
- ii) Leave with pay may be granted to a reasonable number of employees appointed as delegates to attend annual conferences of their trade unions.
- iii) Leave with pay will be granted to an employee who is elected by his/her trade union to the office of President, to

enable the employee to discharge the duties of that office.

- iv) Leave with pay will be granted to employees who by virtue of their trade union membership are called before the Royal Commissions to give evidence, or are summoned to attend by a Minister of the Crown or Government Department to discuss rates of pay/conditions of service.

- **Meetings of Professional Associations and Outside Bodies**

The Chief Executive has discretion to grant leave for attendance of staff at meetings of professional associations and approved outside bodies be limited to 15 days leave with pay in any one leave year.

- **Payment in Lieu of Holidays**

Employees who leave the service of this Authority to take up an appointment outside the Local Government Service who have been unable to take their annual leave entitlement will receive payment in lieu of any outstanding annual leave at the date of termination.

- **Pre-Retirement : Adjustment of Hours**

Employees shall be granted pre-retirement leave amounting to one day per week during the last year of work before their planned normal retirement date.

Employees concerned should make arrangements with their line manager having regard to the needs of the service, to determine a specific day in the working week to be allocated for that pre-retirement leave.

In the event of an employee being required to work on the specified day that pre-retirement leave will be forfeited. During a period of sickness, annual leave, public or statutory holiday, the pre-retirement leave will not operate.

8. FLEXI-TIME

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- 8.1 Flexi-time working for employees allows for a considerable degree of flexibility to be exercised with regard to the arrival and departure of individual participants. Employees' work between agreed 'core' times in the day, the balance of their contracted time is fulfilled flexibly within agreed limits.
- 8.2 Unlike annual leave entitlement, which is honored, credit flexi-time may have to be postponed as the working of the scheme is subject to the needs and priorities of the service and staff must arrange hours with their manager to ensure that each section remains fully effective between office opening hours.
- 8.3 The maximum number of hours which can be accrued in any one four week period is 14 hours, the maximum number of hours to which the employee can be 'in debt' by the end of the four week period is 5 hours.
- 8.4 One and a half days/ three half day's flexi-leave can be taken in any four week period.
- 8.5 Flexible working hours do not affect either the employee's commitment to work their contracted hours or their manager's responsibility to ensure their section is operational during normal office opening hours.

Core Time

The periods during which staff should be present

These are: 10.00 - 11.45
14.00 -15.00

Flexible Hours

The periods outside core time during which employees can work as a matter of choice, subject, of course to the needs of the Service

These are: 07.30 - 10.00
16.00 - 19.00

- 8.6 Lunch breaks must be taken between 11.45 and 14.00. A maximum of one and a half hours lunch break can be taken (this can be extended to two hours with the permission of the individuals line manager. A minimum of thirty minutes lunch break must be taken.

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- 8.7 Although the scheme allows for a degree of flexibility, it must be remembered that the provision of the correct level of service to members of the public and their elected representatives must always be the first consideration.
- 8.8 Some sections may need to be staffed for longer periods than others because of their direct links with the public or because of the nature of their work and this means that the degree of flexibility allowed to participants can vary from day to day, section to section and according to the particular circumstances prevailing at the time.
- 8.9 Flexi-time should be requested and recorded on the employee's annual leave request card.
- 8.10 A leaflet detailing the recording and monitoring of flexi-time will be given at induction to all new starters, and is available to employees from the controlled document library.

9. JOB SHARE

- 9.1 Job share is permanent employment in which two employees voluntarily share the work duties and responsibilities of the same established full time post. The salary and terms and conditions of service are shared on a pro-rata basis according to the hours worked by the job sharers. The incremental point of each job sharer, however, will be determined on an individual basis.
- 9.2 The Authority recognises that many posts could be arranged so that the duties and responsibilities are shared between post holders. All full time posts are suitable for job sharing, unless the post's unsuitability for job share can be positively demonstrated.
- 9.3 All employees are covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services terms and conditions of service. Job sharing partners will have an individual statement of Terms and Conditions of Service covering salary, increments, entitlement to leave, long service leave, public holidays, sick pay entitlements, access to superannuation and cover arrangement.
- 9.4 Hours and the pattern of the working week will be agreed between the job sharing post holders and their manager and will be varied only by the agreement of all parties.

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- 9.5 A post may be shared by two people on a split-day, split week or alternate week basis, giving each employee a pro-rata share of the full-time hours of the post. Job sharers who work alternate weeks maintain their continuity of employment and this will be stated in the Contract of Employment.
- 9.6 Job sharers will be paid the salary for the grade of the pro-rata post in accordance with the appropriate agreements. Public holidays will be pro-rata between the two job sharers (where holidays have been overtaken due to working arrangements, this can be paid back by accruing flexi time or by annual leave). In line with current practice for full time staff, annual leave will only be taken following the specific approval of the job sharer's manager.
- 9.7 Where there is an on-call requirement for a particular post this should be shared equally between job-sharers with on-call payments paid pro-rata and call out paid in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- 9.8 All job sharers will have the option to join, opt out or remain in the superannuation scheme.
- 9.9 Job sharers will have the same access to training facilities and opportunities as full time employees.
- 9.10 Taking into account the needs of the service, limited overlap arrangements may be incorporated into the job share with the agreement of the job sharers manager.
- 9.11 Where one part of a shared post is unoccupied due to sickness, maternity or other leave, the remaining job sharer may be invited, but not required, to undertake additional hours up to and not exceeding the full time hours of the post.
- 9.12 Request for job share should be submitted in writing to the line manager. Applications for job share can be made with or without a partner.
- 9.13 After considering the request, Line Managers should make a recommendation to the relevant Director to approve the request or not.
- 9.14 Where an application is approved for job share, subject to the remaining portion of the post being filled in accordance with the scheme, recruitment for the remaining portion of the post will be undertaken in accordance with the Authority's recruitment policy.

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- 9.15 Until a job-sharing partner has commenced employment, the existing employee will continue to work full time.
- 9.16 If after advertising twice for a job share partner, the post remains unfilled; the existing employee will be informed that a job share arrangement is not possible at that time. A re-application will be considered after six months from the closing date of the last advertisement.
- 9.17 Where one job sharer leaves the employment of the Authority, the remaining job sharer will be offered the position on a full time basis.
- 9.18 If the employee does not wish to take up this option, the remaining hours will be advertised in line with normal procedures. If after advertising, the post remains unfilled, the remaining job sharer will retain his/her existing contract and the manager will determine what action is to be taken in covering the remaining unfilled hours. It is not expected that an existing job sharer will cover the whole duties of the full time post.
- 9.19 Job descriptions will specify the arrangements to allow job sharers to communicate and will clearly indicate which responsibilities are shared and which are allocated to individual job sharers.

10. PART TIME WORKING

- 10.1 Part time working entails when one person is working less than full time hours in a job with its own allocated tasks and objectives.
- 10.2 The Authority realises the benefits that can be gained from part time working. Part time employees may be employed where:-
 - i) There is insufficient work for the job to be done on a full time basis
 - ii) The nature of the work or working hours are best suited to part time work
 - iii) It is difficult to find suitable employees. In this situation full time hours may be made up by part time employment up to their value. Part time employees should not be expected to perform the whole duties of the full time post.
 - iv) A full time employee wishes to return to work part time after maternity leave.

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- 10.3 When reviewing a vacancy and assessing the workload of the section, the manager should take into account how certain duties in the section would be covered on a part time basis. Recruitment to a part time post would be via the usual recruitment procedure.
- 10.4 Requests from existing employees to work part time should be made in writing to their line manager. Any requests will be fully considered taking into account the needs of the service.
- 10.5 Each request should be fully discussed with the employee concerned to ensure they are fully aware of all the implications of moving to part time work, in particular the effect on their terms and conditions of employment.
- 10.6 After considering the request, Line Managers should make a recommendation to the relevant Director to approve the request or not.
- 10.7 If a manager is uncertain whether a change to a part time post will meet their service needs, they could consider if the position could be covered part time for a trial period, with all parties being made aware about what will happen if the trial is unsuccessful. In deciding whether a trial can become a permanent arrangement the focus of the managers' attention will be on the post and not the post holder.
- 10.8 Part time employees will be given written details of their terms and conditions of employment highlighting the terms which differ from those enjoyed by full time employees.
- 10.9 If a part time working request is granted, the Manager may decide to recruit to the balance of the hours that the employee will no longer be undertaking.

11. COMPRESSED WORKING HOURS

- 11.1 Employees may request to work their total number of hours over fewer days. Examples of compressed hours working patterns include working time being reorganised to allow the weekly hours to be worked in 4 or 4 ½ days a week. The maximum number of hours that can be worked in any one day is 11 hours. A minimum lunch break of half an hour must be taken.
- 11.2 Employees can request a change in their pattern of work by writing to their line manager outlining their request. Wherever possible, requests

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should be submitted at least 2 months before the proposed pattern of working hours would begin.

- 11.3 Requests to work compressed hours will be considered, in the first instance by the Line Manager in consultation with the Assistant Corporate Services Manager. The Line Manager should be satisfied that any such request will not have a detrimental impact on service delivery or on the effectiveness of the section.
- 11.4 After considering the request, Line Managers should make a recommendation to the relevant Director to approve the request or not.
- 11.5 Once a compressed hours working pattern is agreed, it is fixed for an initial trial period as agreed by the employee and their line manager. The agreement will be reviewed at the end of the trial period. If both parties agree to the revised working pattern it will then be fixed for a specified period (usually 12 months)
- 11.6 The working pattern will be automatically reviewed at the end of the specified period.
- 11.7 Working compressed hours will not affect an employee's basic pay or annual leave entitlement.

12. VOLUNTARY REDUCED WORKING TIME (V-TIME)

- 12.1 Voluntary reduced working time means reduced working for a specified period, usually to enable employees to manage other personal or caring commitments.
- 12.2 Reduced hours patterns enable people to continue to work when they are unable to fulfill the demands of full-time work because of caring and other responsibilities
- 12.3 The request to reduce working hours must be initiated by an employee in respect of the post they occupy.
- 12.4 This should be done in writing to their Line Manager.
- 12.5 After considering the request and discussing the request with the Assistant Corporate Services Manager, Line Managers should make a recommendation to the relevant Director to approve the request or not.

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- 12.6 The General conditions applicable to full time employees shall apply to those working reduced hours. The concept of proportionality shall apply according to the number of hours worked, unless otherwise stated.
- 12.7 In order to grant a request for reduced working time, Line Managers and Directors, must be satisfied that there will be no detriment to the service and that the work can be satisfactorily covered or no longer needs carrying out.
- 12.8 The job description issued will be that prepared for the established post with addendum to reflect the agreements reached in order to accommodate working reduced hours.
- 12.9 Rates of pay will be paid Pro-rata to the salary grade for the number of hours worked. Commencing salary and increments will be determined in accordance with appropriate National and Local conditions of service and normal incremental progression shall apply. An estimate of how pay may be affected can be obtained from the Assistant Corporate Service Manager.
- 12.10 Annual leave and Public Statutory holidays will be pro-rata according to the reduction in hours work.
- 12.11 The effect of working reduced hours on pension benefits will depend on a number of factors, e.g. the extent of the reduction, whether an employee is nearing retirement etc. Therefore, any employee considering a reduction in hours can contact the Assistant Corporate Services Manager in order to discuss their individual circumstances in advance of an application.
- 12.12 Employees may also wish to discuss the proposed reduction in working hours with the Assistant Corporate Services Manager to ascertain any possible impact of statutory and contractual rights.
- 12.13 The arrangements for reduced hours and the timing of such hours are to be agreed by both the individual and the line manager and approved by the relevant Director the decision will be given to the employee in writing.
- 12.14 The request to work reduced hours can be for a fixed time at the end of which the employee will revert to full-time working or for an indefinite period subject to the satisfactory working of the arrangement. It is the responsibility of each Director to specify any review period.
- 12.15 Possible options are as follows:

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- Reduce to a four day week
- Reduce daily hours
- Reduce hours for specific parts of the year
- Work in term-time only

These options can be for a specified period only or a long term arrangement subject to satisfactory reviews.

12.16 The agreed work pattern will normally be maintained consistently and will only be varied in exceptional circumstances following full consultation.

13. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- 13.1 The Authority aims to provide a sensitive and compassionate response to employees who suffer bereavement
- 13.2 Paid leave to a maximum of 5 days may be granted to staff that suffer a bereavement of a close relative. (This includes spouse or partner, child, parents or grandparents or other close relatives)
- 13.3 The actual total amount of leave granted will be determined by the manager/ Director, taking into account the individual circumstances, for example, the employee has responsibility for the estate of a deceased relative or the distance of the deceased from the place of employment.
- 31.4 All requests for bereavement leave should be discussed with the line manager who will make a recommendation in writing to the relevant Director.
- 13.5 The employee will receive a written response to their request, which will indicate the amount of bereavement leave granted.
- 13.6 Up to a further 5 days without pay may be granted by the Chief Executive. (The period of absence should not exceed five days with and five days without pay in any one leave)

14. SPECIAL CARERS LEAVE

- 14.1 The Authority recognises that some employees have responsibilities for dependents, which on occasions may give rise to an immediate need for time away from work

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- 14.2 Special Carers' Leave is designed to cover urgent, unpredictable, one-off situations only. The purpose of such leave is to help employees to take time off work to resolve a situation or to arrange for the longer term care of the dependent.

A dependent is defined by the statute as "the partner, child or parent of the employee, or someone who lives with the employee as part of their family". In cases of illness, injury or where care arrangements break down, a dependent may also be someone who can reasonably be said to rely on the employee for assistance. For instance, a parent or grandparent who lives elsewhere but who relies on the employee for assistance when they have difficulties.

- 14.3 Typical cases may include:-

- Where a dependent falls ill/injured
- Arrangements for caring for a dependant break down
- Where a dependent dies
- An unexpected incident involving a dependent child during school hours or on a school trip

- 14.4 The legal right is to unpaid leave and reasonable unpaid leave may be taken to deal with such emergencies.
- 14.5 Employees will be unlikely to know in advance when they will require taking carer leave. The employee should therefore contact their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity to advise them of the circumstances they are facing and the need for special carer's leave.
- 14.6 The employee should discuss the situation with their Manager and the number of day's carer leave which may be required. The manager will then make a recommendation to the relevant Director.
- 14.7 The Director may use his/her discretion to grant up to a maximum of 5 days paid leave in any one year. (See 7.1 above) **The need for such leave should normally be discussed with the employee's line manager.**
- 14.8 Carer leave will normally be for the short term where an employee faces an unexpected crisis as detail above. In the cases of longer term carer leave, where the employee is the sole carer or where daily attendance is called for on an extended basis, then other options should be considered.

- 14.9 It would be reasonable to expect that where an employee experiences frequent circumstances of short-term or long-term need for carer leave, then the employee has an obligation in conjunction with their manager to discuss and agree work options to ensure that they can fulfil their carer responsibilities in a planned manner.
- 14.10 Special Carer leave will not be granted to deal with predictable domestic arrangements that could be accommodated using annual or flexi-leave.

14.11 Paid leave is not intended to cover normal family sickness.

Normal family sickness will usually be covered by the employee taking either unpaid leave or annual leave. The line manager may insist that annual leave is used before paid leave is granted.

15. MONITORING

- 15.1 The Authority actively supports the use of work life balance practices as a means of helping employees in balancing home and work commitments.
- 15.2 A crucial aspect to the success of this policy is to ensure consistency in the application of the policy across the Authority.
- 15.3 To ensure this is happening, the Authority has implemented a monitoring procedure to record and review applications:-

Procedure

- i) All requests for work life balance practices must be made in writing to the employee's Direct Line Manager.
- ii) A copy of all applications will be forwarded to the Assistant Corporate Services Manager, together with the recommendations.
- iii) The applications will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Corporate Services Manager to identify:-
 - How many applications are being made
 - The areas in which the applications are being successful/unsuccessful
 - Which aspects of the policy are most/least in demand

- iv) By analysing this information the Authority will check to see if the policy is meeting the needs of the organisation and its employees .
- v) Following analysis a report will be given to the Chief Executive.
- vi) Applications and outcomes will be retained for a period of one year.

16. APPEALS

16.1 Appeals against the application of these policies may be made using the Authority's Grievance Procedure.