

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (January 2021)

Section 1: Your details

EIA lead Officer: Anna Perret – Principal Democratic Services Officer

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Head of Section: Steve Fox – Head of Democratic Services

Chief Officer: Jill Travers – Director of Law & Governance

Directorate: Law & Governance

Date: 19th September 2023

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

Members Parental Leave Policy.

The implementation of a Parental Leave Policy will ensure that all Councillors, regardless of the political party they represent, have appropriate support when having a child(ren). A parental leave policy will make it easier for parents and councils alike to plan for when councillors take parental leave.

Improved provision for new parents will contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of local authority councillors. It will also assist with retaining experienced councillors – particularly women – and making public office more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded from it. The Parental Leave Policy constitutes best practice and will be reviewed in line with changes to national legislation.

Any Member who takes maternity, shared parental or adoption leave is still required under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six-month period unless the Council Meeting agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six-month period.

Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee meeting?

Yes / No **If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date**

Constitution & Standards Committee 28th Sept 2023

Hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4:

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals. We encourage services to consider the impact on those who serve and who have served in the armed forces and their families, in accordance with the Armed Forces Covenant

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
Sex	Negative – Without this policy, it may be more difficult to attract and maintain female members. It is acknowledged that women usually provide most of the child care responsibilities.	Any member giving birth will be entitled to up to 6 months maternity leave and up to 52 weeks by arrangement. Members will retain their basic allowance and any Special Responsibility Allowance.	Head of Democratic Services	For the duration of the policy	Existing budgets
Sex	Negative – There is no legal requirement for Councils to have a parental leave policy in place for members. Without this policy, it may be more difficult for paternal members to support as new parents.	Members shall be entitled to take a minimum of 2 weeks paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth/adoption of their child(ren). Shared Parental	Head of Democratic Services	For the duration of the policy	Existing budgets

		<p>Leave Where both parents are Members, leave may be shared up to a maximum of 24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity.</p>			
All	Neutral – Adoption Leave is part of this new policy	<p>A Member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to six months adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.</p>	Head of Democratic Services	For the duration of the policy	Existing budgets

Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

Head of Democratic Services will work closely with Group Leaders (where applicable) to ensure that the policy does not discriminate

Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

Officers have undertaken research with several local authorities in relation to their Elected Members parental policies. A large percentage of Local Authorities do not have such policies in place, however those that do seem to have adopted a variance the LGA (Local Government Association) model

Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?

Yes / No – (please delete as appropriate)

If 'yes' please continue to section 7.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why:

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?

As part of the engagement process, Members of the Governance working group were consulted with the draft parental leave policy and feedback was sought.

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal publishing requirements. The EIA will need to be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 4. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing.

Section 8: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published** (section 2a)
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts?** (section 4)
- c) **Send this EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and sent your updated EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**