

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2015	REPORT NO:	CFO/055/15
PRESENTING OFFICER	DCFO GARRIGAN		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	NICK MERNOCK	REPORT AUTHOR:	AMANDA CROSS
OFFICERS CONSULTED:			
TITLE OF REPORT:	UPDATED PARENTAL LEAVE SERVICE INSTRUCTIONS		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	MATERNITY SERVICE INSTRUCTION
	APPENDIX B:	PATERNITY SERVICE INSTRUCTION
	APPENDIX C:	ADOPTION SERVICE INSTRUCTION
	APPENDIX D:	PARENTAL LEAVE INSTUCTION

Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members note the changes to the Service Instructions pertaining to parental leave which have been altered to reflect amendments to Regulations in relation to the sharing of maternity and paternity leave.

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the amendments to the Service Instructions attached to this report at Appendixes A - D

Introduction and Background

3. The Government has published the Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014 which enables parents to share maternity or adoption leave between themselves in order to enable both parents to benefit from time off with the new born baby or adopted child.
4. The Regulations also offer rights to the parents of babies born through a surrogacy arrangement and these new rights have been incorporated into the Service Instructions.
5. In the light of the legislative changes Service Instructions and guidance for prospective parents and Managers of those employees has been included in order to explain and then implement these rights should parents wish to exercise them.
6. Existing Service Instructions relating to parental leave have also been refreshed to ensure that they reflect current best practice.

Equality and Diversity Implications

7. The current EIA is relevant and has not required any amendment to reflect these changes.

Staff Implications

8. All employees now have the right to share maternity or adoption leave between the parents. A mother or primary carer can elect to curtail her leave and share the remaining time with her partner. This can be taken in a single period of time or in three separate blocks of time. In practice both parents can be off together or stagger their leave to ensure a parent is always with the baby or child.

Legal Implications

9. The amendments to the Service Instructions ensure they are compliant with the Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

10. There is no impact on the Authority in the adoption of this legislation. Where a parent wishes to exercise their right to shared parental leave the mother or adopter has to end her maternity leave and pay. If a mother or adopter is still receiving enhanced maternity or adoption pay, they have to forfeit this and reduce their benefit to the statutory amount extant at the time. It is unlikely that many Authority employees will therefore wish to exercise this right because of the financial implications of this decision.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

11. The mother has to take 2 weeks compulsory maternity leave before she can exercise the right to share her remaining leave with her partner.

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12. By sharing leave both parents can benefit of time off at the early stages of a child's developments and allow the parents a choice over the balance of child caring responsibilities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
