



BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

**CORPORATE COMMITTEE
MEETING DATE 2018/19**

10 July 2018

CLASSIFICATION:

Open

**If exempt, the reason will be listed in the
main body of this report.**

WARD(S) AFFECTED

All Wards

GROUP DIRECTOR

Tim Shields, Chief Executive

1. INTRODUCTION

Bereavement is a fact of life. It is a stressful experience and the Council has a policy in place to provide additional paid leave to employees who have experienced a bereavement and/or have responsibility for making funeral arrangements and dealing with the estate of the deceased.

It is important that the organisation acknowledges the bereavement and approaches all conversations regarding the situation with compassion and sensitivity.

In 2017/18, c.300 employees took c.900 days of bereavement leave in total.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Corporate Committee is recommended to approve the following changes to the Bereavement Leave policy:

- i) Number of days leave for the death of a close relative increases from up to 3 days to up to 10 days**
- ii) Number of days leave for the death of a person who is not a close relative increases from 1 day to up to 3 days**
- iii) Number of days leave for the death of a person who is not a close relative where the employee has responsibility for arranging the funeral and dealing with the estate increases from up to 3 days to up to 5 days**

The policy has also been updated with other information to reflect best practice and ACAS guidance

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 The Council should be compassionate when dealing with bereaved employees, whilst balancing this with service delivery requirements. A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken which indicates that the Council offers fewer days leave than many other London authorities. There is considerable anecdotal evidence to suggest that where bereavement leave is insufficient, rather than returning to work the employee takes sick leave. Increasing bereavement leave will help ensure that the reason for the leave is accurate.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Policy Context

Other Councils offer bereavement leave. A benchmarking exercise has identified that Hackney offers amongst the lowest level of leave to bereaved employees.

4.2 Equality Impact Assessment

No adverse impact on protected groups.

4.3 Sustainability

Not applicable

4.4 Consultations

Trade Unions have been consulted

4.5 Risk Assessment

There is no appreciable risk to the recommendations in this report.

5. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES

5.1 It is not possible to assess how many employees the change in policy will affect but it is expected that the additional costs will be insignificant.

5.2 The cost of providing the extra days will have to be covered by existing budgets within the relevant service areas. However, a corresponding reduction in sickness levels is expected.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

6.1 In accordance with the Councils constitution, full Council established the Corporate Committee to help it perform its functions. The Corporate Committee is responsible for maintaining an oversight of Human Resources functions which include Bereavement leave policies and procedures.

6.2 The introduction of this policy in Hackney would support this trend and would evidence the Mayors priority of making Hackney a place that works for everyone.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Bereavement Leave Policy

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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