

## **ABSENCE AND LEAVE POLICY**

This paper details the policy and procedure for taking a range of leave within Woughton Community Council.

It should be noted that this policy is for information only and does not form part of your contract, but the information contained within may be referred to in your Contract of Employment (or Main Terms and Conditions).

### **Annual Leave**

The holiday year starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> April and ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> March.

In addition to recognised bank or public holidays, employees will be entitled to twenty-six days annual leave in the first calendar year of employment. After five years employment employees will be entitled to extra leave, the actual amount depending on the individual employee's contract. For staff employed on a part time basis, annual leave entitlement shall be 'pro-rata'.

Employees who join WCC mid-year will have their holiday entitlement adjusted, based on the number of complete weeks between the date of joining and the year end, rounded to the nearest half day.

Employees who leave employment part way through the calendar year will have their holiday entitlement adjusted, based on the number of complete weeks between the date of joining and the year end, rounded to the nearest half day, and, with the exception of dismissal due to gross misconduct, will receive payment for accrued holiday that has not been taken.

Holidays must be requested, using the Sage app or website portal and authorised by the employees Line Manager. The Operations Manager records all annual leave taken by employees via the Sage system.

Holidays must be requested as far as possible in advance. The preferred notification periods are:-

2 weeks holiday	4 weeks notice
1 weeks holiday	2 weeks notice
1 days holiday	1 weeks notice

Every reasonable effort will be made to provide authorisation for holiday requests, however, the operational needs of WCC will always take priority, especially if insufficient advance notice is given.

Requests for longer periods will be considered on a case by case basis by the Council Manager. The smallest unit of holiday, which may be taken, is one half day.

Holiday may not generally be carried over from year to year unless agreed in advance with the Line Manager. In such cases a maximum of five days may be transferred. Holiday carried over must be used by the end of May in that holiday year. No payment will be made for untaken holiday.

Employees are advised not to book holidays until the annual leave dates have been authorised. WCC cannot be held responsible for any arrangements needing to be cancelled as a result of annual leave dates not being authorised.

Employees who are ill whilst on holiday may reclaim annual leave providing a medical certificate is submitted to the Council Manager or Line Manager

### **Unauthorised absence/AWOL**

Employees who take annual leave without authorisation may be required to take the time as unpaid leave and be subject to disciplinary action.

Payment of salary and any other allowances will be automatically suspended after any absence without a satisfactory explanation. If such absence extends beyond five working days, WCC will consider that the contract of employment has been terminated by the employee without the required notice. No further payment of salary

will be due to the employee from the date of termination of employment which will be considered to be the date of the last working day.

### **Special Leave/Sabbatical**

WCC recognises that due to certain situations, an employee will need to unexpectedly spend time away from work and will always consider assisting employees with genuine problems. The length of Special Leave is decided by the Council Manager on a case by case basis. Payment will be at the absolute discretion of WCC but will generally be a maximum of three days in any rolling twelve month period.

Sabbatical leave will be considered on a case by case basis by the Policy and Resources Committee (maximum leave considered will be 3 months every 5 years / 6 months every 10 years)

### **Bereavement Leave**

Employees may have, at manager's discretion, paid bereavement leave when a member of their immediate family dies or needs to attend a funeral. Immediate family includes spouse, child, parent, brother, sister or grandparent. Employees who need time off work due to a bereavement of someone other than immediate family must take such absence as annual leave.

### **Religious holidays and festivals**

Employees who require time off to observe religious holidays or festivals of their religion or religious belief are required to use annual leave. Annual leave must be booked in the normal manner (refer to annual leave section) and will not be unreasonably withheld.

### **Emergency Leave without Notice**

There will be occasions when an employee may need to take leave without notice due to an emergency, e.g. to deal with a leaking washing machine, etc. If such leave is required, you should contact your Line Manager immediately and request emergency leave. Your Line Manager will agree leave of 1 day only, and you will be expected to return to work on the following day. The leave will be recorded on Sage.

### **Adverse weather conditions**

During periods of adverse weather conditions, employees must contact their Line Manager if they may be late or unable to attend work. Where possible, employees may be advised to work from home in such circumstances. The Council Manager or Operations Manager will advise employees if they are permitted to leave work early.

### **Jury Service/Public Services**

Employees who are required to serve on a jury may do so without loss of earnings. WCC will pay the basic wage for up to ten working days per calendar year. Additional time will be considered a leave of absence without pay and the court will compensate the employee for loss of earnings. The court will provide a Certificate of Loss of Earnings that WCC will verify to confirm loss of earnings.

The Line Manager must be advised as soon as possible after a notification to appear for jury or public service has been received by an employee.

Paid or unpaid time off to fulfil certain other public duties will be considered as appropriate. Employees who hold, or propose to hold, a position of public office which requires time off from work, should discuss the matter with their Line Manager.

Recognised public duties include: -

- a Justice of the Peace or a member of a local authority
- An Employment Tribunal
- a prison visitors board or visiting committee
- a governing body of an educational establishment
- Reservist in TA or fire brigade

Any other unpaid work, such as charity or voluntary work, during otherwise normal working hours will be at the absolute discretion of the Council Manager. Such absence is unlikely to exceed more than five working days in any year

<b>Last review date:</b>	<b>October 2024</b>
<b>Next review date:</b>	<b>October 2026</b>
<b>Lead:</b>	<b>Operations Manager</b>
<b>Overseeing Committee:</b>	<b>Operations</b>
<b>Approved:</b>	<b>OC156/24</b>
<b>Review cycle:</b>	<b>2 yearly and/or as per legislation</b>