



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>ODHR Policies and Procedures – Legislative Updates April 2026</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Corporate Policy and Resources Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>26 May 2026</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Information</b>
<b>To be discussed In Committee YES/NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Innovation and Transformation
Outcome	Improve Service Delivery
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	n/a
Included in Current Year Estimates	n/a
Capital/Revenue	n/a
Code	n/a
Staffing Costs	n/a

<b>Legal Considerations</b>	
Input of Legal Services Required	<b>YES/NO</b>
Legal Opinion Obtained	<b>YES/NO</b>

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Completed
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	N/A
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	N/A
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	N/A

## 1.0 **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to present Members with the following policy for information on recent legislative amendments:

- Family Rights at Work Policy – Update
- Sickness Absence Policy & Procedure – Update

- 1.1 OD/HR have responsibility and delegated authority to update policies and procedures in line with legislative requirements and best practice. The policies have been reviewed in line with these requirements, considering also benchmark information from other local Council entitlements and existing arrangements.
- 1.2 The arrangements detailed in the final draft policies are deemed to be appropriate and reflective of all such considerations.
- 1.3 Consultation has been conducted between Management and Trade Unions between March and April 2026. Trade Unions have in turn consulted with and provided feedback on behalf of their members which has been incorporated into the policies. The final updates of the policy documents have been accepted by UNITE, NIPSA and GMB.

## 2.0 **Purpose of the Policies**

- 2.1 **Family Rights at Work Policy** - This policy details provision for the different types of family leave available. The policy has been updated to reflect legislative changes effective from 6 April 2026.

The Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay (Section 7) has been updated to reflect the inclusion of miscarriage within this entitlement, where paid leave will be available to a 'bereaved parent' who has experienced miscarriage before 24 weeks of pregnancy.

- 2.2 **Sickness Absence Policy** - This policy and associated procedures provide a framework for the management and monitoring of absenteeism in a fair, consistent and proactive way, that is non-discriminatory and in accordance with equality legislation

The Sickness Absence Policy has been updated at Section 3.4.1 to reflect the inclusion of Statutory Sick Pay from day one of absence. Employees must now complete and submit form SC2 (Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) Employees Statement of Sickness) to cover absences of 1 – 7 calendar days.

## 3.0 **Consultation**

- 3.1 The draft policies has been considered and agreed at the Senior Management Team and the Trade Unions through the Action Group and Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee (JCNC).

## **4.0 Equality Screening**

- 4.1 In accordance with Council's duty under Section 75 Equality Legislation, the policies have been screened, and the result is that they were screened "out".