



Compassionate Leave Policy

Date Approved	09 February 2026
Review Date	January 2028
Approved by	Full Council

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council

1. Purpose of the Policy

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council ("the Council") recognises that employees may face distressing or exceptional personal circumstances requiring time away from work at short notice. This Compassionate Leave Policy provides a fair and supportive framework for granting paid or unpaid leave to enable employees to deal with bereavement, crises, or significant caring responsibilities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Council, regardless of length of service or contracted hours.

3. Definitions

3.1 Compassionate Leave (Paid)

Paid leave granted to an employee facing:

- The death of an immediate family member
- A life-threatening accident or medical emergency involving an immediate family member
- A crisis requiring the employee's presence to safeguard the wellbeing of a dependent
- Other exceptional circumstances at the Clerk's/Staffing Committee's discretion

3.2 Immediate Family Member

For the purpose of this policy includes: spouse/partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or any person with whom the employee had a close parental or dependent relationship.

3.3 Carer's Leave

Short-term leave to care for a dependent during a medical, disability-related, or emergency situation

4. Entitlement

4.1 Paid Compassionate Leave

Employees may be granted **up to 5 days paid compassionate leave per incident**.

Additional paid time may be granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Clerk and/or Chair of the Staffing Committee.

4.2 Unpaid Compassionate or Carer's Leave

Where additional time is required beyond paid allowance, further **unpaid leave** may be approved.

4.3 Flexibility

In serious or complex circumstances (e.g., terminal illness, sudden trauma, responsibilities arising from a dependent's disability), the Council may consider:

- Temporary adjustment of duties
- Remote working (where appropriate)
- Short-term reduction in hours

5. Requesting Compassionate Leave

5.1 Notification

Employees should notify the Clerk or Chair of the Staffing Committee **as soon as practicable**, stating:

- The nature of the situation
- Their relationship to the individual involved
- How much time they believe they need

Where the Clerk is the employee requiring leave, notification should be made to the Chair of the Staffing Committee.

5.2 Evidence Requirements

The Council reserves the right to request reasonable evidence, such as:

- A funeral notice
- Hospital appointment or admission confirmation

- A brief explanation of the circumstances (no intrusive detail required)

The Council will apply this requirement sensitively.

6. Approval Process

- The Clerk may approve up to 5 days paid leave.
- Requests exceeding 5 days or requiring extended support must be referred to the **Staffing Committee**.
- In urgent situations, approval may be given immediately and formally ratified later.

7. Interaction with Other Types of Leave

7.1 Annual Leave

Annual leave must **not** be used to cover legitimate compassionate situations unless the employee specifically requests this.

7.2 Sick Leave

Where emotional distress results in an employee becoming unfit to work, the **Sickness Absence Policy** may apply.

7.3 Parental or Carer's Rights

Where situations relate to childcare, disability care, or other dependent care, statutory leave may also apply.

8. Confidentiality

All information shared in relation to compassionate leave will be treated confidentially and only shared where necessary with members of the Staffing Committee.

9. Review of the Policy

The Staffing Committee will review this policy **annually**.