

Item: 11

Title: People policies

Gweithredu / Action required	For approval
Amseru / Timing	Routine, as part of the policy update cycle.
Argymhelliad / Recommendation	The Board is asked to approve the adoption of 3 policies as recommended by the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee.
Risg / Risk	CRR1 – People and skills – ensuring that we retain and acquire the skill mix in key areas to ensure we deliver the best services and that we support the people of Llais. It also aligns with Risk Appetite RA8 – an eager appetite to helping our people do things differently and better.
Cyllid / Finance	There are the routine costs of supporting the implementation of our policies, which are included in agreed budgets. However, there is the potential added cost of additional leave granted through enhanced Neonatal Policy. However, that has been assessed as low.
Amcan Cyllun Corfforaethol / Corporate Plan Objective/Amcan Rhaglen/ Programme objective	This relates to the Llais Annual Plan Priority 5 – which is to grow and improve as an organisation It also relates to the Llais 3-year Strategy 2024-2027 - Priority 05. Evolve as an organisation to become a mature, well-run, trusted, and ambitious organisation.
Ecwiti, Amrywiaeth a Chynhwysiant / Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	We are committed to ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusion features in all we do with our people at Llais. An integrated impact assessment has been completed to inform each of the policies referred for approval. The assessment identifies a positive impact through the introduction of each of the 3 policies.
Cyfathrebu / Communications	Please tick one of the following boxes if this activity will have an impact on: Internal: our people ☒

	External: our customers/partners/stakeholders ☒ External: our organisation's reputation ☒
Cymeradwyaeth / Approval/Clearance	Alyson Thomas, Chief Executive
Trafodaethau/ Penderfyniadau Blaenorol / Previous discussions/decisions	These policies build upon previous organisation policies, with updates and revisions that reflect new legislative changes and good practice changes for employers. The documents have also been considered and supported by the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee.
Awdur/ Cyflwyno / Author/presenting	Director of People, Well-being, and Organisational Development.
Dyddiad / Date	10 November 2025
Cefndir / Background	
3 policies have been re-developed and re-drafted due to legislative and other changes. They are • Neonatal and care leave policy • Prevention of sexual harassment policy • Safeguarding policy and procedure. These policies have undergone internal review processes, including staff and trade union consultation, and have been assessed through our integrated impact assessment framework processes. The policies have been presented to the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee and have been supported by the Committee for approval by the Board. This report provides a summary of the key elements of each policy and outlines feedback received during the consultation phase.	
Manylion / Detail	
Below is a summary of the policies under consideration: Neonatal and care leave and pay policy – Appendix 1 In April 2025, the UK government implemented a new employment right: Statutory Neonatal Care Leave and Pay (SNCL). This legislation supports parents whose newborns require medical care shortly after birth.	

To ensure compliance with this new law, and to support our values-based approach as a public sector employer, the policy provides additional paid leave for employees who:

- Have a parental or personal relationship with the baby
- Are responsible for the baby's upbringing
- Are taking leave to care for the baby.

This entitlement is in addition to existing leave provisions such as maternity, paternity, adoption, and shared parental leave. The Llais policy includes payment at an enhanced rate, and this position has been supported by the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee, as outlined below.

Prevention of sexual harassment policy – Appendix 2

Following the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, a new duty came into effect in October 2024 requiring employers to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. This includes:

- Creating a safe working environment
- Implementing clear policies
- Responding effectively to complaints.

Further changes are expected under the forthcoming Employment Rights Bill, expected in October 2026. These will raise the standard from “reasonable steps” to “all reasonable steps” and introduce liability for third-party harassment (e.g. by clients or customers) if employers do not act appropriately.

Safeguarding Policy – Appendix 3

The safeguarding policy was drafted and originally agreed by the Board in April 2023. The policy has been updated to provide clearer guidance to our people on what to do when faced with a safeguarding matter so that we respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.

Consultation feedback

Consultation was carried out with both staff and trade unions on the policies. Whilst no concerns were received in relation to the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy**, suggestions were made that the **Neonatal and Care Leave policy** should offer more generous support than the statutory arrangements provided for.

To explore this further, the People Team contacted several other arm's length bodies in Wales. 5 respondents confirmed they offer enhanced pay (ranging up to full pay

for 12 weeks). Variations existed in qualifying periods and repayment conditions if an employee leaves the organisation. Qualifying periods ranged from one year to 26 weeks.

Statutory pay is currently £187.80 per week, which would be a significant financial drop for affected staff.

On the updated **Safeguarding policy and procedure** feedback from staff and trade unions was received and has been carefully considered and incorporated, with 1 exception. The trade union proposal to split the policy and procedure into 2 separate documents was not agreed after consideration by the Executive Team. This is because it was considered important that our people understand the wider context set out in our policy to encourage compliance with our more detailed procedures.

In support of the policy a safeguarding log is actively kept across all regions to record referrals. This log is subject to a monthly review to ensure consistency of approach, compliance with legislative and wider responsibilities, and to identify opportunities for learning and improvement.

Our people continue to receive advice, guidance and targeted learning on safeguarding, helping them make informed decisions and uphold best practice.

This reinforces our commitment to a safe and responsive environment for both the people of Wales and our people.

Considerations of Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee

The committee was presented with a draft of the Neonatal Care Leave policy incorporating all statutory requirements. They were then asked to consider enhancing the support offered under the policy. Key considerations during the discussion included:

- Responsible use of public funds
- Our responsibilities as a values-based organisation
- The personal impact on staff during neonatal care,
- Financial implications for Llais, including:
 - Frequency of use
 - Timing and cost of staff cover
 - Repayment conditions.

The following options were discussed and considered at length:

- Pay: remain at statutory rate or be enhanced. If enhanced, to what level - full or half pay
- If enhanced pay were to be adopted, should there be a qualifying period eg., 26 weeks, one year
- A repayment clause if the employee leaves within a year.

To assist with the deliberation, the People Team considered the frequency in which neonatal care leave was likely to be paid. Since the formation of Llais, only 2 members of staff have taken maternity leave with a third member of staff expected to take maternity leave later this year. No members of staff have taken paternity leave or adoption leave. Of the 2 babies born to Llais staff members during this time, neither have requested time off due to neonatal admissions.

Statistically, only 1 in 7 babies born in the UK require a neonatal admission, with the average period of admission into a neonatal unit being 7 days (Bliss, 2025). It isn't possible to provide an accurate financial projection of introducing neonatal care leave (enhanced or statutory) for the organisation; however, taking into account experiences to date, together with the age profile for our staff, it is anticipated that the frequency of applications would be low overall.

Recommendations of the Committee

Following detailed discussions and feedback, the Committee recommended that the Board adopts the policies as follows:

Neonatal and care leave and pay policy – that the Board adopt the draft policy with the following enhancements to the statutory requirements:

- Full pay for up to 12 weeks of neonatal and care leave.
- Qualification for such an application would be after 26 weeks employment
- No repayment clause for anyone who subsequently left our employment having received pay for neonatal and care leave.

The committee felt that this would show a lived commitment to our values and behaviours in proactively supporting our staff by removing the potential for added sources of anxiety and stress through challenging and potentially life changing experiences.

Prevention of sexual harassment policy – that the Board adopt the draft policy without any amendments.

Safeguarding policy – that the Board adopt the draft policy without any amendments.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to approve the adoption of these policies as recommended by the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee.

Should the Board approve the adoption of these policies, they will be launched and added as part of our Llais policy framework to the online policy database.

The launch will be supported by communications and awareness raising activity for staff and line managers. Drop-in sessions will be held to support staff and volunteer understanding of the safeguarding policy and procedure, along with more detailed and targeted training for staff with specific safeguarding responsibilities.