Annual Leave and Bank Holidays Policy

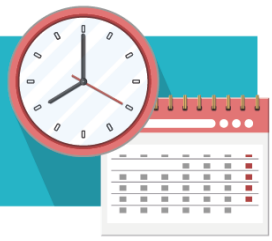
South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils



South Oxfordshire District Council

Listening Learning Leading

Vale of White Horse District Council



Change Record

Change Record	
Policy Title	Annual Leave and Bank Holidays Policy
Version Number	3
Owner(s)	People and Culture Team
Author(s)	People and Culture Team
Approved by	People and Culture Team, SMT and UNISON
Effective date	1 November 2026
Renewal date	31 October 2029
Changes made	Changed the Head of Service to Service Director to fit the new job title, included the additional day of annual leave (grades 1-11 25 to 26 days and grade 11+ 34 to 35 days) and included requirement to keep records of annual leave and holiday pay in accordance with the Employment Rights Act (2025).

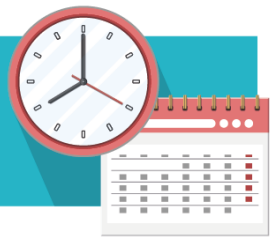


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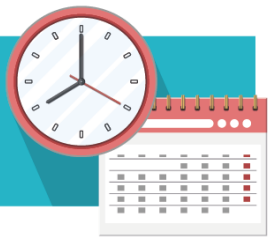
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1 Vision and Values

Our Vision

We are customer focused and approachable. We are honest and open and are committed to providing high-quality cost-effective public services.

Our Values

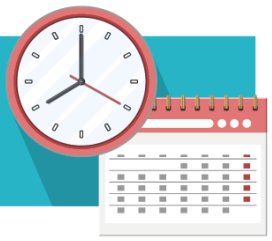
Working Together
We are a committed professional team, who embrace change and help one another improve

People and Planet
We care about each other and the environment we share

Respect
We act with integrity, and champion diversity and inclusivity

Accountability
We take ownership, do what we say, strive for clarity and welcome feedback

Approachability
We are open, honest and accessible



2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose

This document details the councils' Annual Leave and Bank Holidays Policy and Procedure.

2.2 Scope

This policy applies to all permanent and temporary employees of the councils, excluding contractors/agency workers, who are the employees of third parties.

The councils reserve the right to revise, withdraw, or replace policies at any time and to introduce new policies from time to time to reflect the changing needs of the organisations.

This policy document supersedes any previously existing or alternative policies, agreements or arrangements relating to the pension scheme at the councils.

2.3 Contractual status

This policy is non-contractual. The councils are entitled to introduce minor and non-fundamental changes to this policy by notifying you of these changes in writing.

2.4 Relevant legislation

Data Protection Act (2018)

Employment Rights Act (1996)

Equality Act (2010)

General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679 EU)

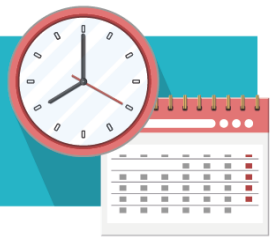
Health and Safety at Work etc Act (1974)

Human Rights Act (1998)

Working Time Regulations (1998)

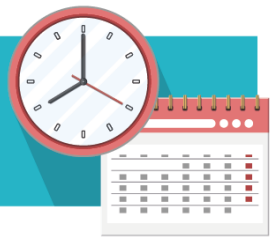
Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/1551)

Employment Rights Act (2025)



2.5 Alternative formats

Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Equalities team if you would like this policy in an alternative format. Email: equalities@southandvale.gov.uk .



3 Policy

3.1 Annual leave entitlement

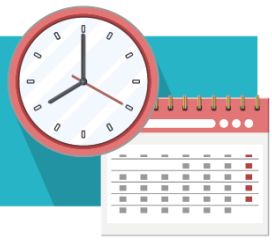
The councils' annual leave entitlement is above the statutory minimum. How much annual leave employees receive will vary according to how many hours they work, their length of service and their grade.

3.2 Annual leave for all full-time employees up to service manager (Grades 1-10)

If employees work full time, 37 hours per week, their annual leave entitlement (exclusive of bank holidays) is 26 working days in a full leave year plus five extra days after completing five years continuous local government employment. Please see Long Service Awards Policy for more information.

Employees will also be given the time off between Christmas and New Year when the council offices are closed. These three working days are not deducted from their annual leave entitlement. The job description outlines if an employee's place of work is open between Christmas and New Year or on a Bank Holiday. If an employees' working day(s) fall on the agreed Christmas closure days, they will be entitled to take them at another time in the year alongside their normal annual leave.

Employees are likely to be working on an annualised hours contract. They may also book additional time off using accrued annualised hours. Please see the Annualised Hours Policy for further information.



3.3 Annual leave for service managers, directors, and the chief executive (Grade 11+)

If employees work full time, 37 hours per week, their annual leave entitlement (exclusive of bank holidays) is 35 working days in a full leave year. This figure does not increase with length of service, and the annualised hours scheme does not apply to them.

These employees will also be given the time off between Christmas and New Year when the council offices are closed. These three working days are not deducted from their annual leave entitlement.

3.4 Annual leave for part-time employees

For part-time employees, annual leave entitlements will be pro rata (the same way that salaries are pro rata) and expressed in MyView in hours. This is because the councils can more accurately pro rata annual leave for part-time staff into hours, and because their days may vary in length and they may not have a standard working day/pattern as is usually the case with full-time employees.

As an example, if an employee works 20 hours a week and their full-time equivalent annual leave entitlement is 26 days, their annual leave will be calculated as follows:

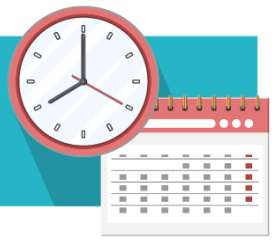
26 days x 7.4 hours = 192.4 hours

(a full-time working day is 7.4 hours)

192.4 / 37 x 20 = 104 hours

(a full-time working week is 37 hours)

They therefore have an annual leave entitlement of 104 hours. If they book a day's annual leave, they will book off however many hours they normally work that particular day (or would have been due to work if they are on a variable roster). This system is in place to ensure that all part-time employees have the same proportion of time out the office regardless of which days of the week they normally work.



Part-time employees will also be given the time off between Christmas and New Year when the council offices are closed. This time is not deducted from their annual leave entitlement. They will not receive any additional time off if the period between Christmas and New Year, or part of the period, falls on the days they do not normally work.

The job description outlines if an employee's place of work is open between Christmas and New Year or on a Bank Holiday. If an employee's working day(s) fall on these days, they will be entitled to take time off in lieu elsewhere in the year in addition to their normal annual leave allowance.

For more information about Bank Holidays for part-time employees, see section 3.10 below.

If an employee increases or reduces their working hours part way through their annual leave year, their annual leave entitlement will be recalculated from the applicable date.

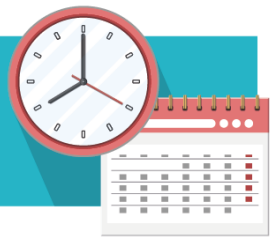
3.5 Annual leave for employees working condensed hours

Employees working condensed hours (full-time hours over fewer than 5 working days per week) will receive a full-time equivalent annual leave entitlement as per sections 3.2 and 3.3 above, however this will be expressed in MyView in hours. This means that if they book a day's annual leave, they will book off however many hours they normally work that particular day.

Employees working condensed hours will also be given the time off between Christmas and New Year when the council offices are closed. This time is not deducted from their annual leave entitlement. They will not receive any additional time off if the period between Christmas and New Year, or part of the period, falls on the days they do not normally work.

The contract outlines if an employee's place of work is open between Christmas and New Year or on a Bank Holiday. If an employee's working day(s) fall on these days, they will be entitled to take the bank holiday elsewhere in the year alongside their normal annual leave.

For more information about Bank Holidays for employees working condensed hours, see section 3.10 below.



3.6 The annual leave year

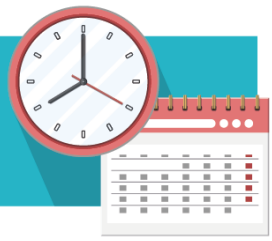
An employee's annual leave year runs from their start date with the council. For example, if their employment began on 8 January, their annual leave year will run from 8 January to 7 January. If they have changed employer between Vale and South, their annual leave year starts from the date their employment began at their current council.

3.7 Carrying annual leave into the next leave year

Employees may carry up to a week's worth of annual leave into their next annual leave year; this will happen automatically in MyView with no action required. If they work full time, this is five days. If they work part time, this is the number of hours they work per week. Line Managers are provided with quarterly annual leave data so that leave carried forward can be monitored. Leave carried forward should be used within the first three months of the new leave year.

If employees wish to carry over more than their working week from one leave year to the next their Service Director may agree to this if they have been unable to take annual leave due to work requirements. An employee's Service Director is entitled to specify a period within which they require them to take any leave above a working week they have carried across e.g. within a month of their new annual leave year. If any additional annual leave has been approved to be carried forward, the employees line manager should notify hr@southandvale.gov.uk .

If an employee has been prevented from using annual leave due to family-related leave and/or sick leave, they are entitled to carry the full accrued amount forward. There is no requirement for Service Director's approval in these circumstances as this is a legislative requirement. Those carrying forward unused leave due to sickness are required to take the leave within 18 months starting at the end of the leave year in which they accrued it. There is no time limit for using annual leave not taken due to family related leave.



3.8 Employees leaving the council

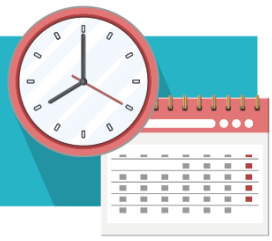
If an employee leaves the council, their annual leave entitlement will be pro-rated to the proportion of their annual leave year that has elapsed by their leaving date. They should ensure, where reasonable, to take this annual leave prior to leaving the council. If they have not taken a proportionate amount of their annual leave entitlement, they should liaise with their manager about how to achieve this during their notice period, allowing for service delivery to be met. We encourage employees to have a conversation with their line manager at the earliest opportunity. Any leave to be taken must be requested via MyView and approved by the line manager as per the usual process.

Subject to the requirement above, any remaining accrued leave that is outstanding at an employee's final day of employment will be credited to their final pay. Any leave taken in excess of an employee's annual leave entitlement will be deducted from their final pay.

3.9 Booking annual leave

All annual leave should be requested through MyView and requires authorisation by an employee's manager prior to them taking the time off guidance on using MyView is available on OurSpace. An employee's line manager is not obliged to authorise time off on any particular day and will take service delivery and any impact on their colleagues into account before authorising (however managers will seek to approve leave wherever possible and not unduly restrict when staff can take leave). If possible, an employee should give notice of their leave equivalent to the length of time they are taking off e.g., if they are taking a week off, they should request this at least a week before their time off begins.

If an employee works full time, they will usually request annual leave as a full or half day (unless on non-standard working patterns when their leave may be expressed in hours). If an employee works part time or condensed hours and has their annual leave calculated in hours, they will specify the number of hours they will be taking off. These should correspond to the full- or half-day hours they usually work on the specific day they take off.



If an employee's leave is in hours, they should keep in mind that when they request part of an hour's annual leave in MyView the hour is split into decimals e.g. 3 hours and 30 minutes will be shown as 3.5 hours.

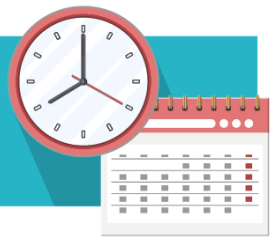
If an employee wishes to book leave for a future leave year and is unable to do this in MyView they should contact hr@southandvale.gov.uk to request the next leave year to be pushed into the system. The system only automatically adds a new entitlement when the leave year rolls forward a manual intervention is required to make this available sooner. Part time leave needs to be calculated manually in any event and is done at the anniversary of the leave year. The system only allows a max of one week's leave to be carried forward so where there is a request to carry forward additional leave (subject to Service Director Approval) a manual adjustment must be made.

An employee's line manager may authorise them booking up to three continuous working weeks out of the office using annual leave or a combination of annual leave and annualised hours in exceptional circumstances (e.g. to visit family who live permanently abroad, family celebrations or weddings etc). If an employee requests more than three weeks away from work (normally fifteen working days for a full-time employee or fewer working days if the time off includes bank holidays) their manager will need to gain agreement from their Service Director via email.

3.10 Bank holidays

There are usually eight bank holidays (some of which are sometimes called public holidays) in England. These are:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- May Day (early May)
- Spring Bank Holiday (usually late May)



- Summer Bank Holiday (late August)
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

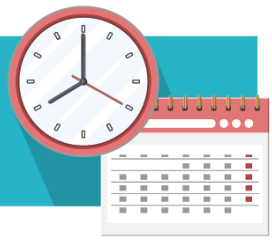
On occasions where an additional bank holiday is applied in a specific year (e.g. King's coronation) adjustments will be made to the system and any calculations.

Full-time employees will receive all bank holidays in addition to their annual leave and the time they receive off between Christmas and New Year when the councils' offices are closed (see sections 3.2 and 3.3).

Part-time employees will receive bank holidays on a pro rata basis. As with annual leave, their bank holiday entitlement is given to them in hours and added to their annual leave entitlement. Any bank holidays that fall on the days they normally work (or would have been due to work if they are on a variable roster) are then deducted from their total bank holiday and annual leave entitlement. The specific hours they were due to work that day are deducted.

A part-time employee's bank holiday entitlement will be based on the actual period they work part time; for example, if they work full time for nine months of their annual leave year and part-time for three months, their part-time bank holiday entitlement will be the pro rata equivalent of the number of bank holidays that fall during that three-month period.

Employees working condensed hours will also have their bank holiday entitlement given to them and added to their annual leave entitlement, however this will be the full bank holiday entitlement (not a pro rata amount). As with part-time employees, any bank holidays that fall on the days they normally work are then deducted from their total bank holiday and annual leave entitlement. The specific hours they were due to work that day are deducted.



3.11 Sickness during annual leave

If an employee falls ill during their annual leave, they should notify their manager at the earliest opportunity. Please refer to the Sickness Policy for further information regarding sickness during annual leave.

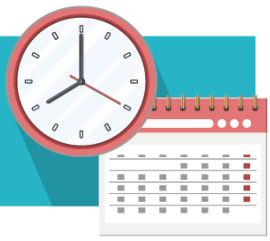
3.12 Purchasing additional annual leave

All employees have the option of purchasing the equivalent of up to a maximum of a week's annual leave each annual leave year, subject to their line managers' and Director's agreement. A week's annual leave will depend on their weekly hours (e.g., a part-time employee working 26 hours a week can purchase a maximum of 26 hours).

To raise a request to purchase additional annual leave, employees should complete a Purchase additional leave request form found in the Documents section of the People and Culture OurSpace site, in conjunction with their line manager & Director and send the form along with the authorisation emails to hr@southandvale.gov.co.uk. Following receipt of the request, the People and Culture team will process this in the following month's payroll – this will be dependent on when in the month the request is received.

A deduction will be made from the employee's salary, and the additional leave will be added to their annual leave allocation. Deductions can be made for the full amount in one go, or pro-rated across several months within the same tax year if requested. This must be agreed with the People and Culture team prior to processing. Should an employee leave the Council(s) before paying for their additional annual leave in full, the remaining balance will be deducted from their final pay.

For full-time employees, the deduction will be based on the number of working days in that year (usually 261). For part-time employees, the figure will be based on their working pattern and number of weekly hours worked. The payment deducted will not affect an employee's pension contributions or continuous service. For a breakdown of the calculation, employees should contact the People and Culture team.

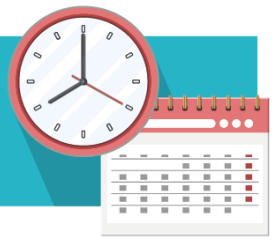


3.13 If an employee has already purchased additional annual leave

If an employee has already purchased additional annual leave and no longer wishes to take this, they may ask the councils to cancel their request and reimburse them. They should agree this with their manager and then contact the People and Culture team so that the cancellation and reimbursement can be processed.

3.14 Selling Annual Leave

In exceptional circumstances where there has been a business reason why an individual has not been able to use their annual leave and has more than one working week to carry forward, an employee can submit a request for unused leave to be paid. Approval is not automatic and requires both the line manager, Director of Finance and Director of Corporate Services approval, in consultation with the People and Culture Manager. Employees must complete the Selling Additional Leave Request Form.



4 Record Keeping

The People and Culture team will keep records of staff annual leave and holiday pay in accordance with the Employment Rights Act (2026) submitted via the HR System.

The People and Culture Team will compile and secure information on the following information:

- holiday taken
- holiday carried over from previous years
- holiday pay (must also include bonusses or commission if applicable)
- any payments in lieu of holiday – for example, pay for unused holiday when someone leaves a job

There is no specific way the councils should keep the information and have the freedom to choose whether they will create a database or a spreadsheet. The People and Culture Team will ensure that the records on MyView are accurate and are in alignment with legislation

The councils will hold this information for at least six years from the date the records were created. An employee will be informed if the councils need to hold onto their information for longer due to exceptional circumstances or operational demands. All personal information will be kept in line with the Data Protection Act (208) and UK GDPR.