**6. Booking SPL (From Shared Parental Leave Guidance, Issue 2, July 2017)**

In many cases, it is anticipated that Notice to take leave will be given at the same time as Notice of Entitlement and Intention. The earlier the employee informs the Council of their intentions, the more likely the Council will be able to accommodate the employee’s request, particularly if they request periods of discontinuous leave. If the employee has already decided the pattern of SPL they wish to take, they can provide more than one Notice at the same time. The employee must give correct notification at least 8 weeks before the date on which they request to start the leave and/or pay. The first 2 weeks of the 8 week notice will be a discussion period.

To take a period of SPL the employee must submit a **Period of Leave Notice** (see form at Appendix 7). This written Notice sets out the start and end dates of each period requested in that Notice. Once the Council receives the Period of Leave Notice, it will be dealt with as soon as possible, but a response will be provided no later than the 14th day after the leave request was made.

The employee can provide a **combined total of up to 3 Period of Leave Notices or Variations of Period of Leave Notice**. The employee can submit a Period of Leave Notice for:

**Continuous period of SPL:** the employee can submit a Period of Leave Notice requesting one continuous period of leave and they will be entitled to take that period of leave, provided they have given the correct Notice and have sufficient leave available. A Confirmation of Period of SPL will be provided to the employee, in writing (see letter at Appendix 8). For example, the mother and partner may both request a continuous block of leave from their respective employers, to enable them to take SPL at the same time.

**Discontinuous periods of SPL**: the employee can submit a Period of Leave Notice requesting discontinuous periods of leave. For example, the mother and partner may request a pattern of leave from their respective employers that allows them to alternate childcare responsibilities.

All requests for discontinuous leave will be considered on a case by case basis. If the employee submits a discontinuous request for SPL a meeting will be arranged with their Line Manager to discuss the request and leave pattern (an invite letter Meeting to Discuss SPL Booking Request will be issued to the employee, see Appendix 9).

In the 2 weeks from the date the Notice was given, the Council can:

* Consent to the discontinuous leave pattern requested;
* Propose an alternative leave pattern; or
* Refuse the leave pattern requested.

The employee will be informed of the decision, in writing, as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than the 14th day after the leave notification was made (confirmed to the employee in a Confirmation of Period of SPL letter, see Appendix 8).

If agreement is reached within the 2 week discussion period, the employee is entitled to take the leave on the dates agreed. Where this is the case, a Confirmation of Discontinuous Periods of Leave letter will be issued to the employee (see letter at Appendix 10).

If no agreement has been reached within the 2 week discussion period, the employee is entitled to take the leave as one continuous period of leave. If this is the case, the employee must:

* Choose a start date for the leave that is at least 8 weeks from the date on which the Period of Leave Notice was originally provided.
* Notify the Council of that date within five days of the end of the 2 week discussion period.

If the employee does not choose a start date within five days of the end of the 2 week discussion period, the period of continuous leave will start on the date of the first period of leave requested in the Period of Leave Notice.

In the event of the Council refusing the request (this will be confirmed to the employee in a Refusal of a Discontinuous Leave Request letter, see Appendix 11) or no agreement being reached during the 2 week discussion period, the employee may withdraw a Period of Leave Notice requesting discontinuous periods of leave.

The Period of Leave Notice can be withdrawn at any time on or before the 15th day after the Period of Leave Notice was given (Notice to Withdraw or Vary a Period of Leave, see form at Appendix 12). A notice for discontinuous leave that has been withdrawn before it is agreed does not count towards the total number of requests for leave that an employee can make.