

Item no.

Report to: **Executive**
Date: **Tuesday 5th July 2005**
Report of: **Executive Member for Corporate Services**
Subject: **Christmas and New Year Holidays - 2005/2006**
Ward: **All**

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider a proposal to close all Council Offices over the Christmas and New Year Holidays and to grant employees two additional half days of annual leave.

2. **Consultation**

- 2.1 This report has been compiled in consultation with:-

Management Team and Corporate Support Team. East Durham Homes.
Relevant Trade Unions. All of which support the proposals.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 In past years, Members have granted two additional half days' leave for employees which have been taken at specified times over the festive season. For the last four years we have closed the offices between Christmas and New Year. This was facilitated by the granting of the usual additional two half days' leave.

4. **Position Statement and Options Appraisal**

- 4.1 From past years positive experiences, it is felt desirable to close the offices again this year at a time when there are few visitors and few other organisations at work. This is a welcome concession to staff and a good employment relations exercise. This measure also helps to reduce stress levels in accordance with the Council's Stress at Work Policy. Any closure would be widely advertised in order to keep residents fully informed of the service provisions. Some savings would be achieved from reduced fuel costs for the buildings.
- 4.2 It is proposed to close the offices at 12.00 noon on Friday, 23rd December, 2005 and to reopen at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday 3rd January, 2006.
- 4.3 This year, to affect a close-down would require staff to use 2½ days of their holiday entitlement assuming Members award the traditional two half days. Specific arrangements will be put in place to cover essential services.

5. **Policy, Financial and Legal Implications**

5.1 **Financial and Legal Implications**

There are no policy or legal implications and any financial implications will be covered by existing budgets.

5.2 **Risk** - A risk assessment has been prepared and measures put in place to manage the risk.

5.3 **Communications** - The close down would be publicised and emergency telephone numbers will be widely published.

5.4 **Corporate** – The proposals in this report support the Council's priority area of 'Striving for Excellent in the Workplace' and in particular SFE1 'To ensure the effective recruitment, development, motivation, recognition, support and reward of staff'.

7. **Recommendation**

7.1 Members are recommended to grant two additional half days' holidays to employees and to close the Council Offices over the Christmas period.

Backgrounds Papers

Relevant Council Minutes

Management Board/Corporate Support Team Feedback.

PC/PH pers/050501

24th May, 2005