



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to: Council

Date of Meeting: 20 November 2008

Report from: Director of Corporate Services

Title of Report: Holiday Arrangements – Christmas and New Year 2008/09

Agenda Item Number:

1. Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to approve arrangements for the Christmas and New Year period 2008/2009.
- 1.2 It is usual practice for the council to award concessionary days to staff to facilitate the close down of most council services over the Christmas period. This year it is proposed to close such services between lunchtime on the 24 December 2008 and reopen on 2nd January 2008. The report proposes that members agree to approve statutory and concessionary holidays during that period.
- 1.3 Members are recommended to
1. Approve the extra statutory and concessionary Christmas Holidays
 2. Agree that employees who are required to work on extra statutory holidays and concessionary days will be given time in lieu to be taken at a later date in consultation with the appropriate Service Team Manager

2. Consultation

- 2.1 The Authority does not have any specific policy on Christmas and New Year holiday arrangements. Traditionally the two extra statutory days available to employees have been allocated between Christmas and New Year following employee consultation a number of years ago. Consultation has been undertaken with corporate management team.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

- 3.1 The Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven

priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council.

3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of '**People and Place**' priority was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan.

3.3 The links to the Council's previous Corporate Plan are in respect of customer excellence in that where services are of a nature that they are required to continue during the Christmas period, arrangements will be made to accommodate this.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

It is not considered that there are any implications to Local Government Reorganisation

4.2 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

4.3 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 Personnel

Employees in service areas who are required to work during the "close down" period, during the Christmas and New Year break, are entitled to leave at a later date in lieu of the extra statutory and approved concessionary holiday(s) subject to local management approval.

4.5 Other Services

There are no specific issues to raise in respect of this report recommendations.

4.6 Diversity

The Council recognises that there are diversity implications in relation to religion, as not all employees will celebrate the Christmas religious festival. The Council will if possible honour other religious festivals and where there are employees who wish to take their extra statutory holidays at an alternative time of the year, alternative provisions will be made wherever possible.

4.7 Risk

The risks associated with not approving this report are that the Council could be deemed to be breaching employee's contracts of employment, as it is an

implied term for a large proportion of employees that they are entitled to take their two extra statutory holidays between Christmas and New Year.

4.8 Crime and Disorder

There are no known implications for Crime and Disorder.

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate valid, reliable, timely, relevant and comprehensive. The Council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

There are no other known implications as a result of this report

5. Background, position Statement and options appraisal.

5.1 In previous years Members have agreed holiday arrangements between Christmas and New Year. This report outlines the proposals for this current year. Generally the result is to close down most Council services between Christmas and New Year using extra statutory holidays and awarding one concessionary day.

5.2 Public Holidays are fixed as follows:

Thursday 25 December 2008	Christmas Day
Friday 26 December 2008	Boxing Day
Thursday 1 January 2009	New Year's Day

5.3 Employees have an entitlement to two extra statutory days leave which traditionally have been allocated to working days between 27 December and 1 January to extend the holiday period for employees.

5.4 Members have regularly agreed one concessionary day to help achieve a complete close down of administrative centres.

5.5 This year the Christmas and New Year period is over two weeks and for the Council to close for the entire period following Christmas day, a total of two additional concessionary days would be required. These would be used on Wednesday 31 December 2008 and Friday 2 January 2009.

5.6 The Council's Corporate Management team have considered the different arrangements being made by the other Districts within the County, during this period and concluded that for the Council to close from Thursday 25 December 2008 until Monday 5 January 2009, would not be in the best interests of public service.

- 5.7 In order for the Council to provide an acceptable level of customer service throughout this period, Corporate Management team recommend that the Council opens as a normal working day on Friday 2 January 2009. It is proposed that each Service Team Manager considers their minimum staffing requirements for this day and authorises any requests for annual leave accordingly.
- 5.8 Christmas Eve is usually a relatively quiet day for the Council and during the afternoon period especially there is little contact from the public. Therefore it is recommended that the Council opens for the morning and Members approve an additional half a day (3.42 hours) on a concessionary basis for the afternoon and the Council closes.
- 5.9 Many direct services continue to operate during the period e.g. Refuse collection, Leisure Centre, Golf Course etc. The employees who are required to attend work are able to take additional leave at a later date.
- 5.10 Detailed below are the proposed Christmas and New Year holiday arrangements for 2008/2009.

Wednesday 24 December 2008	Normal Working morning / concessionary half day - afternoon
Thursday 25 December 2008	Christmas Day
Friday 26 December 2008	Boxing Day
Monday 29 December 2008	Extra Statutory Day
Tuesday 30 December 2008	Extra Statutory Day
Wednesday 31 December 2008	Concessionary Day
Thursday 1 January 2009	New Year's Day
Friday 2 January 2009	Official return to work day

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to

1. Approve the extra statutory and concessionary Christmas Holidays
2. Agree that employees who are required to work on extra statutory holidays / Concessionary days will be given time in lieu to be taken at a later date in consultation with the appropriate Service Team Manager

7. Background papers

**7.1 Christmas and New Year Holiday File
Human Resources**

**Ian Forster
Director of Corporate Services
20 November 2008
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