

CHRISTMAS STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS 2021

Head of Service:	Sarah Conlon, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Wards affected:	All
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	no
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Not applicable

Summary

This report requests that an additional day's leave be granted on Thursday 30 December 2021 in recognition of Officers continued support and dedication through one of the most challenging years in the history of the Council – delivering through a pandemic, a major organisational restructure, uncertainty in the wider population and a public sector which is facing very difficult financial challenges as a result of covid costs.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Award Officers an additional day's leave to be taken on Thursday 30 December 2021**
- (2) Note: SMT are gifting the discretionary day's leave to all Officers on Wednesday 29 December 2021 and that Officers will be required to take a compulsory day's leave from their annual entitlement on Friday 31 December 2021, thus enabling the Council offices to be closed week commencing Monday 27 December 2021.**
- (3) Approve: Where the operational needs of the Council require services to operate over the Christmas period, affected Officers will receive an additional day's pay in lieu of the award of an additional day's leave.**
- (4) Note: Due to the exceptional circumstances the Council and Officers have all been working in, it is not envisaged that this will be repeated in future years.**

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1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To recognise Officers continued support and dedication in delivering services through a pandemic, a major organisational restructure, uncertainty in the wider population and a public sector which is facing very difficult financial challenges as a result of covid costs.

2 Background

- 2.1 2021 has continued to be one of the most challenging years in the history of the Council. The global pandemic has continued into 2021, bringing both continued uncertainty in the wider population and community, as well as financial challenges. With that said, the Council and its Officers have unwaveringly delivered services to its Residents and local community.
- 2.2 During this time, the Council took a major restructure of its organisational structure – the first in its history. Every change process is unsettling for staff, however, staff continued to deliver with professionalism and commitment.

3 Christmas Arrangements 2020/21

- 3.1 In recognition of this commitment and continued effort, the Committee are asked to support:
- The award of an additional day's leave to Officers on Thursday 30 December 2021
 - For those Officers required to provide services over the Christmas period, such as refuse collectors and other front-line services, and where they are unable to take leave on this day, payment of one day's pay in lieu of the extra day being awarded.
 - The closure of Council offices week commencing Monday 27 December 2021. This will be achieved through the discretionary day the Council is gifting staff on Wednesday 29 December and asking Officers to take one day's leave from their annual leave entitlement on Friday 31 December 2021.
- 3.2 If Committee approves these recommendations, the arrangements for Christmas would be as follows:

Friday 24 December 2021	Town Hall to close at 3pm
Monday 27 December 2021	Bank Holiday (Town Hall Closed)
Tuesday 28 December 2021	Bank Holiday (Town Hall Closed)
Wednesday 29 December 2021	Discretionary Day (Town Hall Closed)

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Thursday 30 December 2021	Additional day's leave gifted by Committee (Town Hall Closed)
Friday 31 December 2021	Staff to use annual leave (Town Hall Closed)
Monday 3 January 2021	Bank Holiday (Town Hall Closed)

- 3.3 For those Officers who work part time and are not scheduled to work on Thursday 30 December 2021, an additional day's leave can be taken at a later date.
- 3.4 For those Officers – primarily in Operational Services - who are required to work in between Christmas and New Year an additional day's pay will be paid to them in the January 2022 salary payment. HR will liaise with the Head of Operational Services to confirm.
- 3.5 The out of hours telephony/switchboard service currently provided by Mole Valley will be extended to cover additional days during this period, with anticipated costs remaining as per last year - £200. Where the need to respond to an issue arises, as is usual, further charges may be applied.
- 3.6 Emergency arrangements will continue to be in place over the whole of the Christmas and New Year period and where the need arises Officers will ensure an appropriate response is provided.
- 3.7 Due to the exceptional circumstances the Council and Officers have all been working in, it is not envisaged that this will be repeated in future years.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

- 4.1 Impact Assessment: None
- 4.2 Crime & Disorder: None
- 4.3 Safeguarding: None
- 4.4 Dependencies: None
- 4.5 Other: None

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5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The cost of the additional day's pay for those in Operational Services who are required to work over the festive period is £9,200. This cost can be met from within the Council's budgeted contingency for contract price increases.
- 5.2 Based on last year, the cost of the two day Out of Hours Service extension was £200, this can also be funded from the same source. Should any further response charges arise, funding would be allocated from corporate contingency budgets.
- 5.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The cost of the additional day's leave and response cover can be met from the budgets above.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Employers can require employees to take annual leave provided they give sufficient notice (in this case at least 2 days' notice). It is in the Council's interest to communicate this decision to employees as early as possible to ensure they reserve/save a day of their annual holiday entitlement. As above, the Council will ensure proposals for employees who do not benefit from the additional days are communicated to those employees. There is nothing to suggest these proposals result in less favourable treatment to part-time or essential workers.
- 6.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** none arising from the content of this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** N/A
- 7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** N/A
- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** N/A
- 7.5 **Partnerships:** N/A

8 Background papers

- 8.1 There are no documents referred to in compiling this report.