



CABINET - 29TH SEPTEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: CHRISTMAS CLOSEDOWN ARRANGEMENTS 2021

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet's agreement for
- the Council's Office Christmas Closedown arrangements for 2021
 - the 2 hour time credit arrangement that has in previous years only applied to office based staff who have been required to vacate Council Offices by no later than 12 Noon on Christmas Eve to be extended to include all Corporately employed staff
 - the annual leave entitlement of all Corporately employed staff to be increased by one additional day for 2021 in recognition of their exceptional work during the pandemic.
 - the maximum carry over of leave as defined in the Council's Annual Leave Policy to increase from 5 days to 6 days for 2021.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has in previous years implemented a closedown for offices over the Christmas period. This report recommends the closedown again for 2021 and outlines arrangements for all staff to receive 2 hours' credit for the afternoon of Christmas Eve.
- 2.2 Cabinet are also asked to agree an additional day annual leave for all staff for 2021.
- 2.3 This report only applies to Council Staff employed under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972 and for whom the Council has the power 'to appoint and manage staff on such reasonable terms and conditions as the Authority thinks fit'. This report does not apply to School appointed staff for whom the Council does not hold this power.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Cabinet are asked to agree that:

- 3.1.1 Corporate offices close at 12 noon on Christmas Eve and reopen on January 4th 2022
- 3.1.2 All staff receive 2 hours' credit for Christmas Eve as per the arrangements detailed in this report
- 3.1.3 All staff receive an additional day annual leave for 2021
- 3.1.4 Carry over annual leave be increased to 6 days for this year only.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendations are made to recognise the exceptional commitment and hard work of employees during the pandemic and their excellent response to the challenges it has brought.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Cabinet will be aware that the Council has in previous years implemented a closedown for offices over the Christmas period.
- 5.2 Christmas Day and Boxing Day 2021 fall on Saturday and Sunday respectively and New Year's Day 2022 falls on a Saturday. In line with NJC and JNC National Agreements, Monday 27th December 2021 automatically becomes a public holiday in place of Christmas Day and the Government has designated Tuesday 28th December and Monday 3rd January 2022 as public holidays in substitution for Boxing Day and New Year's Day respectively. The Council's extra Statutory Day falls on Wednesday 29th December 2021.
- 5.3 In accordance with closedown arrangements, offices would close at 12 noon on Christmas Eve and reopen on January 4th 2022. Employees affected by the closedown arrangements will be required to take 2 days annual leave or accrued flexi leave to cover the closedown days of Thursday 30th and Friday 31st December 2021. Any employee required to work during the Christmas closedown period to cover essential services will not be required to take leave.
- 5.4 It is proposed to continue with this practice again this year and shut corporate offices at 12 noon on Christmas Eve and staff who would ordinarily be office based will be encouraged to start the Christmas closedown period at that time also, crediting staff with 2 hours for the afternoon.
- 5.5 It is proposed this year that all staff receive a 2 hour credit. Where front line service and some essential services need to be open on the afternoon of Christmas Eve, services may support the 2 hour paid absence at another time. Where services cannot practically accommodate this 2 hour absence from shift, staff will benefit from 2 hours' additional pay.
- 5.6 In recognition of our excellent staff that have worked tirelessly during the pandemic to ensure that services have not only continued to be provided but have supported new services to be introduced, Cabinet are also asked to agree an additional day annual leave for all staff for 2021, that staff may wish to use during this Christmas period.

5.7 The Council's Annual Leave Policy confirms that 'Employees may carry over up to five days annual leave into the following leave year with the prior approval of their manager. Carried over leave should be used as soon as is reasonably possible in the new holiday year.' It may not be possible for all staff to use this additional day annual leave by 31st December 2021 due to service provision, so Cabinet are asked to agree that carry over annual leave can be increased to 6 days for this year only.

5.8 For clarity this arrangement is for 2021 only and is not a permanent change to the Council's Annual Leave Policy or to the annual leave entitlements of staff.

5.9 **Conclusion**

Our staff have been exemplary and we owe them a debt of gratitude. The ethos of "TeamCaerphilly – Better Together" really has been demonstrated on so many levels, each and every day during the pandemic. As a Council we want to ensure our staff know how proud we are of them.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 There are no assumptions made within this report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has not been completed because the outcome of the report, if approved, will benefit every single employee regardless of who they are, what job they hold and where they work.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Any associated costs relating to the 2 hours credit or the additional day annual leave will be a cost to the employing service.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The personnel implications are included within this report.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 All consultation responses have been reflected in this report.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 1972

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