

APPENDIX I

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 4 OCTOBER 2011

Title:

CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Band]

[Wards Affected: All]

Summary and purpose:

The Council is asked to agree the closure of the Council offices on the three working days between Christmas and New Year each year, with key services maintained during the period.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report relates to the Corporate Priority of Value for Money, ensuring that our activities over the Christmas period are customer focussed and provide value for money.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

Core services will be provided during the period between Christmas and the New Year to ensure that vulnerable residents within the Borough continue to be provided for during this period.

Environment and Climate Change Implications:

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Resource/Value for Money Implications:

Financial savings of £400 per day on office running costs would result from the closure of the building during this period.

The direct cost of the Goodwill Day will be minimal and will be met from existing budgets. The notional costs of the extra day is approximately £50,000 but any work arising during the closure will be dealt with on return.

Legal Implications:

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Introduction

1. For the past two years, Councillors have agreed to close the Council offices on the three working days between Christmas and New Year. Arrangements have been put in place to ensure that core services such as waste and recycling, Careline and Homelessness have continued to be provided.
2. The time has been allocated to staff as follows:
 - Day one – Waverley Day
 - Day two – Goodwill Day gifted by the Council
 - Day three – taken by staff as annual or flexi leave
3. This has proved popular with staff. At the Joint Negotiating Committee meeting between Councillors and Staffside in November 2009, Staffside presented the results of the UNISON staff survey which confirmed that 76% of those staff voting were in favour of Christmas closure.
4. The experience of the last two years has demonstrated that during the closure period services have been maintained, Waverley has continued to respond to emergencies, customer needs have continued to be met and special arrangements such as those put in place for the Waste service have worked well. Staffside have confirmed that they welcome this approach. Should the Surrey Police reception be open to the public during this period, arrangements would be put in place to staff the main reception desk during office hours.

Conclusion

5. That the closure of the offices on the three working days between Christmas and New Year provides financial savings and is an efficient use of time and resources; allows Waverley to provide staff with a good break at Christmas whilst still ensuring service delivery is maintained.

Recommendation

It is recommended that

1. the Council Offices are closed on the three working days between Christmas and New Year each year and that staff are granted a Goodwill Day to be taken on day two of this period; and
2. all staff members be issued with revised terms and conditions of employment to reflect this policy.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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