



*Alison Stuart
Head of Legal and
Democratic Services*

MEETING : HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
VENUE : ROOM 27, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : WEDNESDAY 25 JULY 2018
TIME : 6.00 PM

PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (ONE VACANCY)

Councillor P Boylan (Chairman)
Councillors, S Bull, S Cousins, M McMullen, P Ruffles (Vice-Chairman)
and M Stevenson

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DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.
4. It is a criminal offence to:
 - fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
 - fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
 - participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
 - knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

Public Attendance

East Herts Council welcomes public attendance at its meetings and will provide a reasonable number of agendas for viewing at the meeting. Please note that there is seating for 27 members of the public and space for a further 30 standing in the Council Chamber on a “first come first served” basis. When the Council anticipates a large attendance, an additional 30 members of the public can be accommodated in Room 27 (standing room only), again on a “first come, first served” basis, to view the meeting via webcast.

If you think a meeting you plan to attend could be very busy, you can check if the extra space will be available by emailing democraticservices@eastherts.gov.uk or calling the Council on 01279 655261 and asking to speak to Democratic Services.

Audio/Visual Recording of meetings

Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using whatever, non-disruptive, methods you think are suitable, which may include social media of any kind, such as tweeting, blogging or Facebook. However, oral reporting or commentary is prohibited. If you have any questions about this please contact Democratic Services (members of the press should contact the Press Office). Please note that the Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to halt any recording for a number of reasons, including disruption caused by the filming or the nature of the business being conducted. Anyone filming a meeting should focus only on those actively participating and be sensitive to the rights of minors, vulnerable adults and those members of the public who have not consented to being filmed.

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2018

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Member's Declaration of Interest.

4. Chairman's Announcements

5. Closure of Council Offices on Christmas Eve (Pages 13 - 42)

6. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2018,
AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Boylan (Chairman)
Councillors S Bull, S Cousins, M McMullen,
P Ruffles and M Stevenson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Vicki David	- Human Resources Officer
Helen Farrell	- Human Resources Officer
Claire Kirby	- Human Resources Officer
Kate Leeke	- Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer

70 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor P Ruffles and seconded by Councillor M McMullen that Councillor P Boylan be appointed Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the meeting. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that Councillor P Boylan be

appointed Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the meeting.

71 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2018/19 CIVIC YEAR

It was proposed by Councillor M McMullen and seconded by Councillor S Bull that Councillor P Boylan be elected Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the remainder of the 2018/19 civic year. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that Councillor P Boylan be elected Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the remainder of the 2018/19 civic year.

72 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2018/19 CIVIC YEAR

It was proposed by Councillor M Stevenson and seconded by Councillor S Cousins that Councillor P Ruffles be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the 2018/19 civic year. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that Councillor P Ruffles be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the 2018/19 civic year.

73 MINUTES - 18 APRIL 2018

Councillor S Bull proposed and Councillor S Cousins seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2018 be confirmed as a correct record

and signed by the Chairman. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2018, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

74 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that the Leader would confirm in due course which Member would fill the vacant seat on the Committee recently held by Councillor C Woodward. The Chairman sought Members' views on holding meetings of the Committee in the evening. A number of Members stated a preference for the meetings to continue to be held in the afternoon.

75 TURNOVER UPDATE: MARCH 2017 - APRIL 2018

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report inviting Members to consider the Turnover Report for the period April 2017 to March 2018.

The Human Resources Officer reported that the employee turnover rate had fallen from 17% in 2016/17 to 14.9% in 2017/18 however it was still above the Council's target of 10%.

Members were advised that 18 out of the 43 voluntary leavers (42%) had completed an exit questionnaire. Overall, 66% of leavers rated the council as 8 out of 10 or higher. The percentage of leavers who said they would recommend the council as an employer to

others is also high (87%) however it has fallen since 2016/17 (96%).

Members were also advised of a number of positive comments and areas that may need attention from exit questionnaires. The Human Resources Officer confirmed that HR were working closing with managers to address these issues e.g. identifying career paths and reminding managers to have 1 to 1s.

The Officer confirmed that the analysis of exit questionnaires had not revealed any particular trends for why employees were leaving the organisation. The Chairman commented on the reliability of exit questionnaires and queried how the Council could address the problem of Officers not completing them.

Members were advised that Officers regularly chased leavers for their completed exit questionnaire and on some occasions an exit interview was held instead.

Councillor S Bull proposed and Councillor S Cousins seconded, a motion that the turnover report be noted and that turnover targets remain unchanged for 2018/19. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the turnover report be noted; and

(B) the turnover targets remain unchanged for 2018/19.

76 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STATISTICS - QUARTERLY REPORT

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report setting out management statistics for the period April to June 2018. The Head summarised the report and highlighted a number of key areas. She referred to the current headcount of 333 which equated to 290.26 full time equivalent posts (FTE). It was noted that the number of vacant funded hours expressed as FTE posts, was 46.82 hours.

Members were advised that Officers were working closely with managers to reduce the number of vacancies. The Officer gave a detailed summary of progress with regard to filling vacancies.

Members were advised that the projected turnover for 2018/19 based on leavers from April to June was 26.3% which was above the target of 10%. The HR Officer detailed figures regarding leavers for each quarter.

Members were advised that, based on quarter 1 data, the projected sickness absence rate for 2018/19 is 5.58 days per FTE which is below the target of 6.5 days.

Members celebrated the training opportunities made available in the first quarter and the high level of participation especially in respect of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) learning programme.

The HR Officer reported that there were no concerns with regard to the equalities monitoring data in Quarter 1. In response to a query from a Member on

the low number of male employees working part time, the HR Officer commented that women were more likely to take advantage of part time and flexible working options which were well promoted throughout the organisation, and were attractive for remaining in employment.

The Officer confirmed that HR have developed an action plan with regard to progress with reviewing and updating HR policies and were working through this. Members noted the HR statistics as presented.

RESOLVED – that the Human Resources Management Statistics for the period April to June 2018, as now submitted, be noted.

77 HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL: UPDATE

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report inviting Members to note the Human Resources and Payroll Update. The Interim Head commented on enhancing the experience of those who worked for the Authority.

Members were advised of the Health and Safety Officer's role in compliance monitoring. There had been no reportable incidents and a training programme had been arranged for Officers that use and administer the lone working devices.

The Payroll Manager had continued to deliver a high quality payroll service during the implementation of the of the new Human Resources system. Members were advised that Officers had only minor actions to

finalise in terms of compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) action plan.

Members were updated in respect of the Agile Workspace project, the new pay policy currently being drafted, research being undertaken and a report being produced regarding Mental Health first aiders in the workplace and apprentices.

Members received positive feedback on this year's cohort of apprentices and Officers gave a number of examples. Officers confirmed that they were working with UNISON in respect of facility time recording and that information was required to be published by July. Officers detailed the meaning of facility time.

The Interim Head commented on the Back to the Floor sessions being undertaken by the Leadership Team as a response to the Staff Survey and she also referred to the full report. Members were advised that the full report had been shared and highlights and lowlights were being shared at staff briefings.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that the Human Resources update report, be noted.

78 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING: 6 JUNE 2018

The Minutes of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 6 June 2018 were submitted for information. Councillor M Stevenson expressed a number of concerns regarding the way this meeting had progressed.

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development referred to differing views and suggested the need for dialogue before Local Joint Panel. She assured Members that Officers will continue to work closely with UNISON.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 6 June 2018 be received.

79 HEALTH AND SAFETY: MINUTES

The Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee held on 22 March 2018 were submitted for information.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2018 be received.

The meeting closed at 4.23 pm

Chairman
Date

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 25 JULY 2018

REPORT BY THE INTERIM HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSURE OF COUNCIL OFFICES ON 24 DECEMBER WHERE CHRISTMAS DAY FALLS ON A TUESDAY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: *None*

Purpose/Summary of Report

Members are invited to re-consider the report submitted to Human Resources Committee on 18 April together with this supplementary report and review the decision taken.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE</u>	
That:	
(A)	the earlier decision be noted.
(B)	The Council's offices be closed on 24 December 2018 and staff be required to take time off
(C)	the Policy Statement on the closure of council offices on 24 December where Christmas day falls on a Tuesday be approved

1.0 Background

1.1 In March 2018, a request to close the Council's Offices on Christmas Eve (24 December) was submitted to the Leadership Team via the Staff Suggestion Scheme of East Herts.

1.2 The Leadership Team discussed the request and asked that

options be explored on the impact on customers of an extended closure. The Leadership Team was clear that the priority was to ensure customers' needs were balanced with benefits to staff.

- 1.3 A report was submitted to the Local Joint Panel on 21 March 2018 with two recommendations. These were supported and the following recommendations were submitted to Human Resources Committee on 18 April 2018 for approval:

The Policy Statement on the closure of council offices on 24 December where Christmas day falls on a Tuesday be approved subject to:

- *confirmation that appropriate and sufficient arrangements be put in place in terms of emergency cover over the five day holiday period; and*
- *assurances be provided that the public would receive advance notification of the proposed closure and given assurances in terms of continuity of service should an emergency arise during the closure of the offices over the Christmas period*

- 1.4 The recommendations were considered by the Human Resources Committee on 18 April 2018 and it was resolved *"that Christmas Eve should be viewed as a normal working day and the offices should be open and accessible to the public in the usual way"*.

2.0 Report

- 2.2 The decision of the Human Resources Committee was cascaded to staff through team meetings, the Leadership "blog", the Staff Forum meeting, Connect and Updates.
- 2.3 Many staff took to the intranet to express their feelings at the decision taken. Additionally, staff approached individual members of the leadership team to express their depth of

feelings. More recently staff raised the issue again directly with the Leadership team at the Questions and Answers session at staff briefings (in July).

- 2.4 The swell and strength of feeling shown by staff generally, the different avenues staff have taken to make their feelings known, has continued since the decision was communicated, and persists.
- 2.5 A frustrating aspect of any job is a view that Leadership and/or Senior Managers are at odds with the feelings and mood of the majority of staff. The Interim Head of Human Resources and Chief Executive have met to discuss and assessed the strength of feeling displayed by staff which has necessitated a reassessment of the situation as detailed in the report .
- 2.6 The Council is concerned about the impact on staff morale and wanted to take this opportunity to demonstrate that the Council is listening to the views of staff. The Council understands, the pressures of balancing work and outside commitments particularly during the lead up to Christmas Day, and is asking Members to revisit the earlier decision made.
- 2.7 Christmas Eve will fall on a Monday in 2018 and then not until 2029. The Council's partners at Stevenage, with whom we have joint services, have already confirmed it will be closed on Christmas Eve.
- 2.8 The report submitted to Members on 18 April 2018 attached at **Essential Reference Paper "F"** outlined the options staff would be given in respect of the closure; all options require that time taken is repaid, or taken from leave. There is a pragmatic view that East Herts will benefit from an extended closure in terms of savings on heating and other associated costs, and that we have sufficient and safe cover for our customers.
- 2.9 In the light of the feedback from staff, Members are requested

to re-consider the report submitted on 18 April and the decision taken at that meeting.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate)</i> :	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy
Consultation:	Leadership Team and Unison
Legal:	None
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	Approved by LT
Risk Management:	None
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	None
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes

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Policy Statement on the closure of council offices on 24 December where Christmas day falls on a Tuesday

Date agreed at Local Joint Panel:	21 March 2018
Date agree at HR Committee:	18 April 2018
Implementation Date:	18 April 2018

Statement

Whenever Christmas day falls on a Tuesday, the council offices will close on 24 December and all staff will be required to take annual leave on that day.

Date	Open/Closed	Comments
Friday 21 December	Open	Normal working day
Saturday 22 December	Closed	Weekend
Sunday 23 December	Closed	Weekend
Monday 24 December	Closed	Enforced closure
Tuesday 25 December	Closed	Public Holiday - Christmas Day
Wednesday 26 December	Closed	Public Holiday - Boxing Day
Thursday 27 December	Open	Normal working day
Friday 28 December	Open	Normal working day

Benefits of closing the office

- Potential of improved health and wellbeing - all employees will be able to have an extended rest break over the Christmas period;
- Promotes the council as a family friendly employer - 24 December is often a time spent with family;
- It will avoid any potential conflict amongst employees over who has annual leave approved on 24 December;
- All of the above could boost staff morale;

- Potential reduction in heating and lighting costs as the offices will not need to be heated/lit on 24 December for 1 day before being closed again for 2 days.

Risks of closing the office

- Potential reputational risk - there will be no face to face services available to customers for 5 consecutive days and on a day that customers might normally expect the council offices to be open;
- Potential complaints from those staff who do not wish to take annual leave over the Christmas period;
- Potential complaints from those staff who do not have annual leave to request and do not wish to be “required” to take leave;
- Some services will need emergency cover to be provided and there may be conflict in the team over who should cover this.

Emergency cover for services

The Leadership Team have considered the impact on services of closing on Christmas Eve and of having such an extended closure period. The usual emergency procedures will be put in place to cover the closure.

Procedure for taking leave on 24 December

In 2018

Where possible, staff should save 1 day of their annual leave entitlement to use on 24 December 2018.

Where staff have already booked, or taken, all of their annual leave entitlement and do not have current annual leave entitlement to take 24 December 2018 as annual leave they may choose one or a combination of the following options:

- Take 1 day from next year’s leave entitlement;

- Accrue flexi time in the months preceding December and be able to 'bank' the hours to take 24 December off as flexi leave;
- Use accrued Time off In Lieu (TOIL) and be able to 'bank' it to take the time off on 24 December – this needs to be with the prior approval of the manager and must be in line with service requirements;
- Take unpaid leave.

Future years

For future years where Christmas Day falls on a Tuesday, staff will be required to save one day of their annual leave entitlement to use on 24 December.

Communication

In 2018

As much notice as possible will be given to staff regarding the closure on 24 December 2018 with regular reminders throughout the year.

Future years

Staff will be given a minimum of 10 months' notice of the closure to allow them sufficient time to manage their annual leave accordingly.

Public

The public will be given advance notice as appropriate e.g. notices in reception, on the EHC website etc.

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Extract from General Leave Policy

5.0 Annual Leave

5.1 Leave Year

5.1.1 The Council operates an anniversary leave period commencing on the date an employee commenced working for the Council. Those employees starting or leaving employment during the year are entitled to leave proportionate to the number of completed weeks of service during the year.

5.2 Part Time Staff

5.2.1 Annual Leave entitlement will be applied pro-rata for part time employees based on 37 hours full time working week. For example an employee with full time equivalent 22 days annual leave entitlement working 20 hours per week will be entitled to 12 days annual leave.

5.3 Approval for Taking Leave/Carrying Forward Leave

5.3.1 All leave is taken at the discretion of your Line Manager and requests will need to be looked at in the context of the cover available within the team to ensure that the service provided is not disrupted.

5.3.2 Managers should try and plan staffing arrangements well in advance so that peak holiday periods are adequately covered so that holiday requests can be treated equitably.

5.3.3 Where a late request is received, the employee should not expect or assume that it will be granted and managers should treat such requests, due to unexpected events, sympathetically. As a general rule, however, employees should give at least

twice the amount of notice that they wish to take as leave. Therefore, if 5 days' holiday is being requested, at least 10 working days' notice is required.

5.3.4 As far as possible all employees should take their annual leave before the end of their leave year. Where this is not possible up to five days annual leave may be carried forward into the next leave year with the prior written consent of their Line Manager.

Essential Reference Paper "D"

Extract from Contract of Employment

Holidays

- 1.1 Your annual leave entitlement is «Annual_leave_days» days which expressed in hours is «Annual_leave_hours» ******(inclusive of an extra 5 days or 37 hours for previous local government service ******subject to confirmation). Your entitlement will be pro-rated if you are part time and/or on a fixed term contract.
- 1.2 In addition to the annual leave entitlement East Herts Council grants the following public holidays to all members of staff:
- New Year's Day
 - Good Friday
 - Easter Monday
 - May Day
 - Spring Bank Holiday
 - August Bank Holiday
 - Christmas Day
 - Boxing Day
- 1.2.1 ******Public holiday leave for part time staff is calculated as 1/5th of the working week, which is «Bank_holiday_entitlement_if_PT» hours.
- 1.3 East Herts Council operates an anniversary leave period commencing on the date you start employment with East Herts Council.

- 1.4 If you start or leave employment during the year, you are entitled to leave proportionate to the number of completed weeks of service during the year. Unless otherwise advised by East Herts Council, you should ensure that you take your pro-rata outstanding annual leave before you leave East Herts Council. If, on termination of employment you have taken holiday in excess of your accrued annual entitlement, you consent to the deduction from your final installment of salary or from any other sum due to you, an amount equal to your salary for the numbers of days holiday taken in excess of your accrued entitlement.
- 1.5 All leave is taken at the discretion of your line manager. Up to 5 days annual leave may be carried forward into the next leave year with the prior written consent of your line manager. **Your annual leave entitlement will increase when you reach SCP 22/29/32/35.

Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) Template

EqIAs make services better for everyone and supports value for money by getting services right first time.

EqIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-users. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups. They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached these decisions.

EIAs are always proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The numbers of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposed policy on a protected group (e.g. disabled people), the more vulnerable the group in the context being considered, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be.

When to complete an EIA:

- When planning or developing a new service, policy or strategy
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy
- When ending or substantially changing a service, policy or strategy
- When there is an important change in the service, policy or strategy, or in the city (eg: a change in population), or at a national level (eg: a change of legislation)

Assessment of equality impact can be evidenced as part of the process of reviewing or needs assessment or strategy development or consultation or planning. It does not have to be on this template, but must be documented. Wherever possible, build the EIA into your usual planning/review processes.

Do you need to complete an EIA? Consider:

- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to any people because of their protected characteristics?
- How many people is it likely to affect?
- How significant are its impacts?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
- How vulnerable are the people (potentially) affected?

If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EIA it is usually sensible to document why.

Age: People of all ages

Disability: A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition includes: sensory impairments, impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects, progressive, organ specific, developmental, learning difficulties, mental health conditions and mental illnesses, produced by injury to the body or brain. Persons with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection are all now deemed to be disabled persons from the point of diagnosis.

Gender Reassignment: In the Act a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected

Pregnancy and Maternity: Protection is during pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which the woman is entitled.

Race/Ethnicity: This includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and includes refugees and migrants, and Gypsies and Travellers

Religion and Belief: Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief.

Sex/Gender: Both men and women are covered under the Act.

Sexual Orientation: The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people

Marriage and Civil Partnership: Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

1. Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) Template

First, consider whether you need to complete an EIA, or if there is another way to evidence assessment of impacts, or that an EIA is not needed.

Title of EqIA	Closure on 24 December 2018 and subsequent years where Christmas Day falls on a Tuesday	Date	12 March 2018
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<p>Team/Department</p>	<p>All council employees</p>
<p>Focus of EqIA</p> <p>What are the aims of the new initiative? Who implements it? Define the user group impacted? How will they be impacted?</p>	<p>Aim – to close the council offices on 24 December 2018 and subsequent years where Christmas Day falls on a Tuesday to give all employees an extended break over the Christmas period and to avoid disputes within teams as to who should have 24 December off.</p> <p>Who implements it – HR will be responsible for ensuring effective communication to remind employees and managers. Managers will be responsible for ensuring that employees manage their leave accordingly.</p> <p>User group impacted – employees who ordinarily work on Mondays</p> <p>How will they be impacted? – all employees will need to use 1 day of their annual leave on 24 December. For 2018, if employees have already booked or used their annual leave, they can use other leave (e.g. flexi, TOIL, unpaid leave)</p>

2. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff ALL DATA IS FROM E&D REPORT 2016/17	What do people tell you? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean? Impacts (actual and potential, positive and negative. Clearly state each)	What can you do? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Age	<i>Under 20 – 1.7%</i> <i>20-29 – 6.2%</i> <i>30-39 – 15.9%</i> <i>40-49 – 26.6%</i> <i>50-59 – 34%</i> <i>60-64 – 10.2%</i> <i>65+ - 5.4%</i>			
Disability	3% have a disability			
Gender reassignment	No data available			
Pregnancy and maternity	5 employees currently on maternity leave. Their maternity leave ends before 24 December 2018 however 3 of them may have annual leave to take at the end which takes them beyond 24 December. Likely to have further		Will need to be mindful of those employees who have maternity leave over 24 December.	Treat 24 December as a bank holiday for maternity leavers? (ie add onto end of maternity leave) Include a reminder in letters to employees before, during and after their maternity leave

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff ALL DATA IS FROM E&D REPORT 2016/17	What do people tell you? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean? Impacts (actual and potential, positive and negative. Clearly state each)	What can you do? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	employees starting their maternity leave later in the year which extends beyond 24 December 2018			
Race	4.2% are from BAME groups			
Religion or belief	Christian – 56.4% Non-Christian – 3.5% No religion – 21% Not known – 19.3%	Some employees may not wish to take an additional day off during a religious festival they don't celebrate	Potentially more advantageous to Christian employees over non-Christian employees as the enforced leave is around a traditionally Christian festival	Allow employees time off during other non-Christian festivals/events e.g. Ramadan
Sex/Gender	72% female 28% male 35% of staff are part time females 5% of staff are part time males		Staff who do not usually work on Mondays will not be affected as this is a non-working day for them anyway. Will potentially affect more females (and more part time females) than males due to workforce composition.	Managers should be flexible with how 24 December 2018 can be taken as leave e.g. if they don't have annual leave to take allowing part-time employees to work on one of their non-working days so that they don't have to use leave for 24 December
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual – 77.9% LGBT – 2.3% Unknown – 19.5%			

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff ALL DATA IS FROM E&D REPORT 2016/17	What do people tell you? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean? Impacts (actual and potential, positive and negative. Clearly state each)	What can you do? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Marriage and civil partnership	No data available			

Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

All employees regardless of the protected characteristics above will be required to take time off on Monday 24 December each year where Christmas Day falls on a Tuesday. Managers will be encouraged to be flexible with regard to how their employees take leave on 24 December 2018

HR will send out regular messages throughout the affected year to remind staff
 HR and LT should re-inforce the message that the suggestion to close on 24 December came from an employee and therefore we listen to our employees
 HR and managers should offer support to employees who are having difficulties

3. List detailed data and/or community feedback which informed your EqIA (If applicable)

Title (of data, research or engagement)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2016/17			

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4. Prioritised Action Plan (If applicable)

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
NB: These actions must now be transferred to service or business plans and monitored to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.				

EIA sign-off: (for the EIA to be final an email must sent from the relevant people agreeing it or this section must be signed)

Lead Equality Impact Assessment officer: Nathan Bookbinder

Date:

Directorate Management Team rep or Head of Service: Kate Leeke

Date: 18 April 2018

Author of Equality Impact Analysis: Vicki David

Date: 18 April 2018

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 18 APRIL 2018

REPORT BY INTERIM HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSURE OF COUNCIL OFFICES ON 24 DECEMBER WHERE CHRISTMAS DAY FALLS ON A TUESDAY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

Purpose/Summary of Report

Members are invited to approve:

- a Policy Statement on the closure of council offices on 24 December where Christmas day falls on a Tuesday and
- the council offices being closed on 24 December 2018

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

(A)	The Policy Statement on the closure of council offices on 24 December where Christmas day falls on a Tuesday be approved subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirmation that appropriate and sufficient arrangements be put in place in terms of emergency cover over the five day holiday period; and • assurances be provided that the public would receive advance notification of the proposed closure and given assurances in terms of continuity of service should an emergency arise during the closure of the offices over the Christmas period;
(B)	The Council offices be closed on 24 December 2018 and staff

	<p>be required to take time off subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• confirmation that appropriate and sufficient arrangements be put in place in terms of emergency cover over the five day holiday period; and• assurances be provided that the public would receive advance notification of the proposed closure and given assurances in terms of continuity of service should an emergency arise during the closure of the offices over the Christmas period;
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 A suggestion to close the council offices on Monday 24 December 2018 was received through the Staff Suggestion Scheme on 28 December 2017. Due to 25 December 2018 falling on a Tuesday, it was felt that demand for staff requesting time off on that day would be high and may cause conflict within teams regarding who would have to cover the office.
- 1.2 The Leadership Team discussed the suggestion on 5 March 2018 and tasked HR with looking at the options for implementing a closure on 24 December 2018.
- 1.3 Initial informal and brief discussions with UNISON regarding a closure on that day were positively received.
- 1.4 It was agreed that a policy statement should be implemented covering future closures of the council offices where Christmas day falls on a Tuesday.

2.0 **Report**

2.1 **Implications**

Closing the council offices on Monday 24 December will mean that the offices will be closed for 5 consecutive days (including the weekend) from Saturday 22 – Wednesday 26 December as follows:

Date	Open/ Closed	Comments
Friday 21 December	Open	Normal working day
Saturday 22 December	Closed	Weekend
Sunday 23 December	Closed	Weekend
Monday 24 December	Closed	Proposed enforced closure
Tuesday 25 December	Closed	Public Holiday - Christmas Day
Wednesday 26 December	Closed	Public Holiday - Boxing Day
Thursday 27 December	Open	Normal working day
Friday 28 December	Open	Normal working day

The Leadership Team have considered the impact on services of closing on 24 December and of having such an extended closure period. The usual emergency procedures will be put in place to cover the closure.

For 2018, staff may have already booked, or taken, all of their annual leave entitlement and do not have current annual leave entitlement to take 24 December 2018 as annual leave. The Leadership Team will therefore be providing alternative options available to staff should the final decision be to close on 24 December (see 2.5).

2.2 Current practice on taking annual leave

Aside from public holidays (Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day), the council does not currently enforce annual leave during the Christmas/New Year period: employees can choose to either work or request annual leave during this period provided the service is appropriately covered. All annual leave is requested and taken with the approval of the manager.

There are two main documents that refer to the terms and conditions relating to annual leave: the General Leave Policy and the Contract of Employment. Please see ERP C and D for the extracts from each document on annual leave. There is no reference in either document as to when annual leave should be taken.

2.3 Benefits of closing the office

- Potential of improved health and wellbeing - all employees will be able to have an extended rest break over the Christmas period;
- Promotes the council as a family friendly employer - 24 December is often a time spent with family;
- It will avoid any potential conflict amongst employees over who has annual leave approved on 24 December;
- All of the above could boost staff morale;
- Potential reduction in heating and lighting costs as the offices will not need to be heated/lit on 24 December for 1 day before being closed again for 2 days.

2.4 Risks of closing the office

- Potential reputational risk - there will be no face to face services available to customers for 5 consecutive days and on a day that customers might normally expect the council offices to be open;
- Potential complaints from those staff who do not wish to take annual leave over the Christmas period;
- Potential complaints from those staff who do not have annual leave to request and do not wish to be “required” to take leave;
- Some services will need emergency cover to be provided and there may be conflict in the team over who should cover this.

2.5 Options available for staff regarding the closure on 24 December 2018

Where possible, staff should save 1 day of their annual leave entitlement to use on 24 December 2018.

It is recommended as a reasonable approach that staff are given various options to help them with the requirement to book a day of leave.

Where staff have already booked, or taken, all of their annual leave entitlement and do not have current annual leave entitlement to take 24 December 2018 as annual leave they may choose one or a combination of the following options:

- Take 1 day from next year’s leave entitlement;
- Accrue flexi time in the months preceding December and be able to ‘bank’ the hours to take 24 December off as flexi leave;
- Use accrued Time off In Lieu (TOIL) and be able to ‘bank’ it to take the time off on 24 December – this needs to be with the prior approval of the manager and must be in line with service requirements;

- Take unpaid leave.

2.6 Next steps

- Agree a joint statement with Unison (supporting the proposal) and cascade to all staff in a timely way (a draft can be found in ERP B);
- Place an article on the intranet with regular reminders throughout the year;
- Reminders of the arrangement to be given at staff briefings;
- Communicate to the public in due course e.g. notices in reception, on the EHC website etc.

2.7 The Policy Statement can be found at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

The extract on annual leave from the General Leave Policy can be found at **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.

The extract on annual leave from the Contract of Employment can be found at **Essential Reference Paper 'D'**.

An Equality Impact Assessment can be found at **Essential Reference Paper 'E'**.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

None

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(must be at least a Head of Service)

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(if different from contact officer)

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