

## **Report to Leader of The Council**

**Subject:** Christmas & New Year Closure of Community Centres for 2024

**Date:** 31 October 2024

**Author:** Building Services & Compliance Officer – Property Services

### **Wards Affected**

Borough Wide – only where the 5 community centres are located

### **Purpose**

To seek approval that community centres are closed from Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 inclusive, over the forthcoming Christmas and New Year period.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

### **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

Community centres are closed from Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 inclusive.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 The opening and closing times of the Community Centres during the Christmas and New Year period have evolved and been reduced over a number of years in order to maintain a minimum service where feasible but to reduce the costs at the quietest time of the year. Previously, reports have shown relatively poor income and attendances over the Christmas and New Year Period as most regular and block bookings do not attend and generally usage is low. As a result, the Centres have traditionally reduced their normal opening hours together with closure at the bank holidays

- 1.2 Operating a reduced service over this period allows staff to take annual leave without the need to provide cover. It therefore seems sensible in both operational and business terms. Following consultation, caretaking staff have indicated they have no concern regarding this proposal. There have been no complaints with regard to reduced operating times during the Christmas and New Year period in previous years.

## **2 Proposal**

- 2.1 It is proposed that community centres are closed from Wednesday 18th December 2024 to Wednesday 1st January 2025 inclusive.

## **3 Alternative Options**

- 3.1 The alternative would be to close the Centres just for the Bank Holidays and open as normal in between; however, based on past experience it is likely that most regular groups will cancel on the other days during this period.

## **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Staff that will be affected by the revised opening hours for the this year's Christmas/New Year holiday period have been consulted on the arrangements for taking holidays and lieu time etc. Staff are supportive of the proposal. This proposal offers the opportunity for leave to be taken without the need for additional service cover being made.
- 4.2 The closures are consistent with the approved base budget and this decision is not expected to have any further adverse impact on income. In addition, some minor reduction in utility costs will be obtained during the period of closure.

## **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 None

## **6 Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 None

## **7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications**

- 7.1 A small reduction in utility use

## **8 Appendices**

8.1 EIA – Closure of the community centres for xmas period - 2024

CIA - Closure of the community centres for xmas period - 2024

## **9 Background Papers**

9.1 None

## **10 Reasons for Recommendations**

10.1 To allow staff to take annual leave without the need to provide service cover.

10.2 To obtain some minor reduction in utility costs during the closure period.

10.3 The Christmas and New Year period is one of low demand for community centre bookings.

### **Statutory Officer approval**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer**

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of the Monitoring Officer**