Purpose of Report
To propose awarding ENC staff a one-off additional day's leave (pro rata for part-time staff) in 2017/18 to recognise their continued commitment and hard work during challenging times, and to close earlier on the last working day before Christmas.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At Personnel Sub-Committee on 11 June 2013, the decision was taken to award staff an extra day's annual leave as a one-off thankyou in recognition of their hard work and commitment during several years of austerity, during which staff numbers reduced by around 15%. That extra day was awarded in 2013/14 only, and did not increase staff's general leave allowance. There was no increase in costs, as backfill for the extra leave was not provided, and no noticeable impact on customers.

1.2 The constraints on Local Government finance continue, and the demands on staff are increasing in line with the growth in the population of the District. This Sub-Committee is well aware of the increase in stress-related sickness absence; an action plan to tackle this is being prepared and will be submitted to its next meeting.

1.3 Annual leave and free time are very highly valued by ENC staff. Staff recognise the tight financial circumstances in Local Government and have 'gone the extra mile' for several years now. As a gesture of recognition and thanks, an extra day's leave was very well received in 2013 and no doubt would be again, so it proposed that we repeat this reward.

2.0 Options considered re extra day's leave

2.1 The options considered in 2013 as regards the extra day's leave included giving staff:
- an extra day in December, for Christmas shopping.
- their birthday as annual leave.
- an extra day’s leave during 2013/14 and letting them decide when to take it.

2.2 The decision taken in 2013 was to give staff the flexibility to take the day any time between 1 May 2013 (although the decision was only taken in June) and 30 April 2014. Part-time staff received a pro-rata entitlement. The extra day or part-day was added to everyone's annual leave card, and was booked with permission from the individual's line manager in the normal way.

2.3 It is proposed that the same approach is adopted for 2017/18, with the leave to be taken between 1 October 2017 and 30 April 2018.

3.0 Christmas closure

3.1 For the last 2 years, the office has closed at 4.00 p.m. on Christmas Eve or the last working day before the Christmas break when Christmas Day is on a Sunday or Monday. There has been no negative feedback from customers.

3.2 Calls and visits from customers have historically been very low in the afternoon on the last working day before the Christmas and New Year closure (only about a dozen in 2016) and many staff take the afternoon or the whole day off anyway. It is proposed that we trial closure at 12.00 noon on 22 December 2017, which is the last working
day of the year as Christmas Day is on the Monday. This would be treated as a further additional half-day’s leave, with appropriate adjustments / arrangements for part-time staff.

4.0 Equality implications

4.1 There are no equality implications of this paper. All staff would have the same entitlement, pro rata for part-time staff.

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from these proposals.

6.0 Risk management

6.1 There are no new risks arising from these proposals. They are designed to help mitigate the risk of increased staff sickness levels by rewarding and recognising staff commitment and hard work.

7.0 Resource and Financial implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from these proposals. In theory, fewer hours could mean reduced productivity but given the low levels of activity on the last afternoon before Christmas and the expected boost to morale that the award of an extra day’s leave would create, based on our experience in 2013/14, it is thought to be unlikely that there will be any negative impact on productivity in practice.

8.0 Constitutional Implications

8.1 There are no Constitutional implications arising from these proposals.

9.0 Implications for our Customers

9.1 There are not expected to be any negative customer services implications arising from these proposals. We operate an emergency out of hours service which will come into effect as soon as the offices close. The impact of the early Christmas closure will be monitored and reported back to a subsequent meeting of this Sub-Committee.

10.0 Corporate outcomes

10.1 The work reported here contributes to the Corporate Outcome of Effective Management, by recognising the value and contribution of our staff.

11.0 Recommendations

11.1 Members are recommended to approve:

   a) A one-off extra day’s leave for all staff, pro rata for part-time staff, to be taken between 1 October 2017 and 30 April 2018; and

   b) Closure of the Council Offices at 12.00 noon on Friday 22 December 2017, to be awarded as a further half-day’s leave with appropriate arrangements for part-time staff; and note that

   c) a report will be submitted to a subsequent meeting setting out the impact on customer service of early Christmas closure, with a view to deciding whether to make this a permanent arrangement.

   (Reason - in recognition of continued staff contribution to the council’s service delivery during a prolonged challenging period for local government)
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<th>Legal</th>
<th>Power: Local Government Act 1972</th>
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<td>Other considerations: Report to Personal Sub Committee 11/6/13</td>
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| Person Originating Report: | David Oliver, Chief Executive - 01832 742105 |
| Date:                     | 5 September 2017 |

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(Committee Report Confidential Rev. 24)