

Item: 13

Policy and Resources Committee: 21 September 2021.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Report by Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider public holiday arrangements and other activities associated with the celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That the UK Government has announced an additional public holiday on Friday, 3 June 2022, to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

2.2.

That, in addition, it has been announced that the late May Bank Holiday, observed by many employers but not Orkney Islands Council, has been moved to Thursday, 2 June 2022, providing for a four day weekend to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

2.3.

That it is for individual councils to determine whether they wish to award the additional public holiday on Friday, 3 June 2022 and move any existing public holiday date to Thursday, 2 June 2022.

2.4.

That the Council could choose to recognise the event by granting either:

- An additional public holiday; or
- An additional day of fixed annual leave to be granted to staff that must be taken on Friday, 3 June 2022.

2.5.

That, alternatively, the Council could choose not to award the additional holiday and all employees would be expected to work as normal.

2.6.

That, as the local public holiday schedule for 2022/23 has not yet been set, in respect of moving any existing public holidays to Thursday, 2 June 2022, the Council could choose to re-allocate any of the public holidays usually scheduled, with those on May Day or Dounby Show Day suggested as the most suitable.

2.7.

That work is underway to co-ordinate local community events for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022, including the lighting of a beacon.

It is recommended:

2.8.

That employees, in the employment of the Council on 3 June 2022, be awarded an additional day of fixed annual leave to be taken on Friday, 3 June 2022.

2.9.

That those employees who are required to work on Friday, 3 June 2022 shall have a pro rata day in lieu added to their holiday entitlement for 2022/23.

2.10.

That Thursday, 2 June 2022 be designated as one of the Council's 10 public holiday days for 2022/23, replacing May Day for 2022 only.

2.11.

That, should the leave arrangements referred to at paragraphs 2.8 to 2.10 above be approved, the Council Offices, schools and all other services, other than those provided on a 24-hour basis, such as care homes, will be closed on Thursday, 2 June 2022 and Friday, 3 June 2022.

3. Background

3.1.

A programme of events to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee is to take place over a four-day weekend from Thursday, 2 June until Sunday, 5 June 2022. The UK Government has announced that an additional public holiday will take place on the day of Friday, 3 June 2022 and that the late May Bank holiday will be reallocated to Thursday, 2 June 2022.

3.2.

Councils will need to plan for the event and consider issues associated with implementing this holiday in their workplace.

3.3.

The Scottish Government has issued a letter to Directors of Education, which provides guidance on making a request for an exceptional closure of schools in the Authority area.

3.4.

It is for individual Councils to determine whether they wish to award the additional public holiday and / or move any existing public holidays.

4. Options

4.1.

The Council could choose to recognise the event by granting either:

- An additional public holiday and anyone required to work on 3 June 2022 would be recompensed in accordance with local arrangements in place for public holiday working; or
- An additional day of fixed annual leave to be taken on 3 June 2022 wherever possible, with employees required to work on that day instead being entitled to an additional day of annual leave pro rata, to be taken as part of their annual leave entitlement.

4.2.

Alternatively the Council could choose not to award the additional annual leave date and employees would be expected to work as normal, however there may be adverse staff morale implications if this option is chosen.

4.3.

In addition one of the 10 public holidays currently provided to staff could be re-allocated to Thursday, 2 June 2022.

4.4.

Seven of these public holidays are normally allocated to the Christmas and New Year holiday period, and previous consultation with staff has shown there is not a strong desire for that approach to vary.

4.5.

The other three public holidays are normally allocated to Easter Monday, May Day, and Dounby Show Day. Given Easter Monday represents the celebration of an established and significant religious holiday and that Dounby Show Day is traditionally allocated to support a specific local event, it is recommended that May Day would be logistically the easiest holiday to reallocate for 2022.

4.6.

May Day is a holiday for schools also, meaning that moving it to 2 June 2022 would require an alteration to the school calendar, however it would mean staff who work in schools could be treated consistently with other staff.

4.7.

Any decision regarding the holiday must be consistently applied across the workforce. In line with previous royal celebrations, the Scottish Government has issued a letter giving authority for an exceptional closure of local authority schools, whilst recognising that the holiday is not prescriptive and it is up to individual councils to consider how they will celebrate the occasion.

4.8.

It is recommended that employees are awarded an additional day of fixed annual leave, in 2022/23, which must be taken on Friday, 3 June 2022 where possible and those required to work on that day will be entitled to an additional day of annual leave entitlement, to be taken at a future date within the leave year. This would provide for the day to be recognised in line with the Government approach but avoid the additional cost of providing enhanced public holiday terms and conditions to those employees required to work that day.

4.9.

In addition it is recommended that the Public Holiday schedule for 2022 include Thursday, 2 June 2022 and not May Day, for this one year only.

4.10.

This would mean that Council Offices, schools and all other services other than those provided on a 24 hour basis e.g. care homes, are closed on 2 and 3 June 2022.

5. Activities to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

5.1.

Discussions around local activities to support the celebrations are currently ongoing and planning is at an early stage.

5.2.

It is currently planned that the lighting of a beacon, similar to the celebrations for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012 will be undertaken.

5.3.

In addition other relevant local events may be developed in due course and these would normally be led by community associations.

6. Human Resources Implications

6.1.

Terms and conditions of Council employees provide that the suggested additional day is not contractually required to be granted.

6.2.

If the option of granting an additional public holiday on the day of 3 June 2022 is chosen, then employees who would be required to work on 3 June 2022 would be entitled to the enhanced terms and conditions that are applied to other public holidays.

6.3.

If the additional public holiday is provided employees required to work on 3 June 2022 would be entitled to an additional day of annual leave this year to be taken at a future date.

6.4.

The additional day of fixed annual leave is specific to 3 June 2022, therefore if the option of awarding an additional day of annual leave is chosen, it should only be applied to those who are classed as employees on 3 June 2022.

6.5.

Choosing to award an additional day of fixed annual leave to be taken on Friday, 3 June 2022 would avoid the need to provide enhanced terms and conditions to those required to work on that day.

6.6.

Current arrangements for the 10 public holidays can be summarised as follows:

- Seven days designated for the festive period close down.
- Three days designated as public holidays – Easter Monday, May Day and Dounby Show.

6.7.

Public Holidays are set by the Chief Executive each year in advance of the leave year which runs from 1 April until 31 March. Therefore in consultation with Trade Unions any days can be allocated to any dates in theory.

7. Corporate Governance

This report relates to the Council complying with its duties as an employer and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

8. Financial Implications

8.1.

The financial implications associated with each of the options outlined at section 4 above are as follows:

- Public Holiday – up to £70k per day:
 - Any employee required to work on a public holiday day would normally be entitled to either a day off in-lieu or pay at double time, but excluding staff that work on a rota or shift system, who simply have the additional day added to their overall leave entitlement.
 - For all services where relief arrangements are in place, such as the provision of care for the elderly, all relief staff would be entitled to double time for working on a public holiday.
 - For all staff that are required to be on stand-by duty on a public holiday, then higher rates of pay would normally apply.
- Annual leave – up to £35k per day:
 - Where the additional day's annual leave is to be taken on a designated day, then the similar relief arrangements would apply as for a public holiday, but without the requirement for incur any enhanced rates of pay for relief staff or standby payments.
- No award – no financial implications would arise from this option.

8.2.

These costings are based on the assumption that additional relief cover would be required for all staff that operate on a rota or shift system in the care service including residential and home care, plus an allowance in respect of property, operations and marine services to maintain a minimum level of service, and as such it is considered to represent a prudent estimate.

8.3.

No allowance has been made for the impact that an additional fixed day of annual leave will have on productivity levels across the Council's services.

9. Legal Aspects

Awarding employees an additional day of annual leave to be taken on Friday, 3 June 2022, service permitting, together with the equal treatment for the balance of the employees who may be required to work on that day in accordance with the contract held, is a matter that the Council can grant.

10. Contact Officers

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