

Ordinary Council (OPEN) Meeting

15 December 2021

Addendum 1:

ITEM NO	SUBJECT	FIL REF	PG
SECTION 3: CORPORATE SERVICES			
C/3/23/12/21	CLOSURE OF MUNICIPAL OFFICES BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR 2021/ 2022	2/6/R	1 - 3

SECTION 3
CORPORATE SERVICES

ITEM C/3/23/12/21

CLOSURE OF MUNICIPAL OFFICES BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR 2021/2022

Directorate: Corporate Services **Demarcation:** All Wards

File Ref: 2/6/R

Attachments: None

Report by: Senior Manager: Human Resources

Date: 14 December 2021

Purpose of the report

That Council consider the request for the closure of the municipal administrative offices during Festive Season between Christmas 2021 and New Year 2022.

Background

During the last couple of festive seasons, it was observed that very few residents are visiting in particular the respective Municipal Administrative Offices during this period of the year. Those members of the community who would visit the offices do so mainly to enquire about services accounts or to report service failures and problems.

Administrative offices, except those who render a service to the public, can be closed without any negative impact on service delivery. The option is that the municipality can be fully operational until **Friday, 24 December 2021 at 11h30 and thereafter remain closed until Friday, 31 December 2021. Therefore, the offices would effectively reopen on Monday, 03 January 2022** without hampering service delivery in any way.

Calendar:

DATE	HOURS OF WORK	PROPOSED DATES OF OFFICE TO BE CLOSED FOR PUBLIC
Friday, 24 December 2021	Normal working day	Admin office proposed to close at 11:30
Saturday, 25 December 2021	Week-end (Christmas Day)	
Sunday, 26 December 2021	Week-end	
Monday, 27 December 2021	Public Holiday	
Tuesday, 28 December 2021	Normal working day	Employees to take Annual Leave
Wednesday, 29 December 2021	Normal working day	Employees to take Annual Leave
Thursday, 30 December 2021	Normal working day	Employees to take Annual Leave
Friday, 31 December 2021	Normal working day	Admin office proposed to close at 11:30
Friday, 1 January 2022	Public Holiday	

Employees can however not be forced to take annual leave and it is at their preference to take annual leave on condition that they do have annual leave to their credit. *Therefore it must be noted that employees who wish not to take annual leave will operate as per normal working hours.*

All essential services sections of the Directorates of Community Services and Engineering Services must be fully operational and all their staff must be available during the closure period. An exceptional case is applicable to Finance Department where staff should be available until audit is completed.

The following sections, apart from the essential services sections, cannot close completely and must have skeleton staff in attendance during the aforementioned period:

- **Directorate: Financial Services:**
 - All Sub-Sections within the Directorate

- **Directorate: Corporate Services:**
 - Communications and Customer Relations Management Division,
 - Human Resources Management Branch
 - Legal Services Division

- **Directorate of Economic Development and Planning**
 - Building Control
 - Land Use Management Division
 - Economic Development Division

- **Directorate of Community Services**
 - Integrated Human Settlements

The Directors must identify and provide a schedule with dates and details of essential services personnel on duty and standby to ensure seamless service delivery during the peak season.

Comments by Chief Financial Officer

The recommendations of the Municipal Manager are supported.

Comments: Manager Legal Services

The recommendations of the Municipal Manager are supported.

Comments: Director Corporate Services

Leave provisioning is a financial cost implication to the municipality, and therefore the employer cannot grant Compulsory Business leave to employees as this has got huge financial implications. Employees are not forced to take leave, they have the option to work if they do not opt to take annual leave. Bitou Municipality, being a disaster prone area, is highly likely forced to grant employees compulsory business leave when disaster strike our area.

Recommended by the Acting Municipal Manager

That Council agrees, in principle, that the administrative municipal offices may officially be closed on Friday, 24 December 2021 at 11h30 until Friday, 31 December 2021, effectively reopening on Monday, 3rd January 2022 without hampering service delivery in any way, subject thereto that;

- (a) The Directors liaise first with the affected personnel to establish whether they all wish to take annual leave during the period, and that;
- (b) The following sections maintain skeleton staff;
 - (i) *Financial Services*
 - (ii) *Customer Care , Legal Services divisions and Human Resource branch (Corporate Services)*
 - (iii) *Building Control and Town Planning and Economic Development Divisions (Economic Development and Planning Directorate)*
 - (iv) *Integrated Human Settlements (Community Services)*
- (c) That all Essential Services Sections be fully operational and staffed, with back-up personnel on standby.
- (d) That Senior Managers and/or Managers must be on duty at the office during normal office hours.
- (e) That all employees who agree to the closure of their respective divisions / branches for the non-public holiday calendar working days being: 28, 29, 30 and 31 December 2020 apply for vacation leave and that same may then be granted on condition that they have sufficient vacation leave.
- (f) That all offices close at 11h30 on Friday, 24 December 2021 and Friday, 31 December 2021.
- (g) That the necessary public notice regarding the closure be published in the local print media, municipal website, social media and posted on municipal notice boards/ offices.