

## Proposed Time-off Arrangements - Royal Wedding

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### Policy and Strategy Committee

22 February 2011

#### Purpose of report

- 1 To seek approval for Friday 29 April 2011 to be granted to Council employees as a fixed one-off additional holiday in celebration of the Royal Wedding.

#### Main report

##### Background

- 2 An additional public holiday has been announced by the Scottish and UK Governments for **29 April 2011** to celebrate the wedding of His Royal Highness Prince William and Miss Catherine Middleton.
- 3 The Scottish Government has also written to the Director of Children and Families to prompt early action by the Council to request a reduction in the 2010/11 school year in light of the additional holiday.
- 4 The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) has confirmed that it will be for each Council to decide its arrangements in respect of the day. COSLA has issued a circular to outline the available options (attached at Appendix 1), along with guidance to help Councils reach a decision.
- 5 The Government has highlighted the positive benefits for employees from the extra holiday and also the potential adverse impact for morale if the day is not adopted. Private and public sector organisations have adopted a range of time-off arrangements for the day. A short summary of arrangements in the public sector is attached at Appendix 2.

##### Options for the Royal Wedding day

- 6 The options for the 29 April 2011 are -:
  - a) **normal working on Friday 29 April 2011** – the additional public holiday is **not** adopted and Council buildings and schools are open as usual;
  - b) **grant a fixed one-off additional holiday** - employees would receive a holiday on 29 April 2011 with a normal day's pay and those required to work on the additional holiday would receive a normal day's pay and a day off at a later date; or

c) **designate Friday 29 April 2011 as a fixed one-off additional public holiday** - employees receive an extra public holiday with a normal day's pay. Those required to work on the public holiday are entitled to normal public holiday enhancements.

7 There is **no statutory right** for employees to take bank or public holidays or be paid for time-off on these days.

8 An employee's entitlement to public holidays is determined by the contract of employment. Council contracts of employment specify the exact number of paid public holidays that employees are entitled to. This means that employees do **not** automatically qualify for any additional bank or public holidays that are set by Government. It will be for the Council to decide whether or not to grant the extra day.

#### **Proposed arrangements for Council staff**

9 COSLA has confirmed that the majority of Scottish Councils are planning to recognise the event by granting a fixed one-off additional holiday to be taken on 29 April 2011. Only Highland and North Ayrshire Councils have so far recommended not supporting the event.

10 The cost of an additional day's holiday is estimated to be in the region of £250k for 'Red Book employees who represent the largest proportion of the workforce. If an additional public holiday was granted instead, the cost is estimated to be in the region of £320k. These additional costs are not provided for within existing budgets.

11 If the Council does decide to adopt the 29 April 2011 as a fixed one-off additional holiday, the following points should be noted:-

a) part-time employees will be entitled to the extra holiday on a pro-rata basis;

b) employees absent on adoption, maternity, parental leave etc. will also be entitled to the extra holiday ; and

c) employees required to work on the day will receive a normal day's pay and a day off in lieu at a later date.

12 While an extra holiday would involve additional costs to the Council, the Committee is recommended to approve a fixed one-off additional holiday for Council staff to be taken on 29 April 2011. This is on the basis that it would provide a positive benefit for staff and support the Scottish Government's plans to celebrate the Royal Wedding.

#### **Position for Schools**

13 Where an authority wishes to close a school, it may only do so by making an application to the Scottish Government under the exceptional closure mechanism.

14 The Director of Children and Families has already obtained approval from the Scottish Government for a reduction in the school year to apply in the event that an additional day's leave is adopted by the Council. This step was considered appropriate in view of the tight timescales involved and the need for early action to allow for planning and notification for staff, parents etc.

### **Consultation with the Trade Unions**

- 15 The Trade Unions have been asked for their views on the proposal to grant a fixed one-off additional holiday on 29 April 2011. The Teachers' Side Secretary is in favour of the proposal.
- 16 The Employees' Side Secretary (who is the lead representative for the other recognised unions such as GMB, Unison, Unite etc.) has asked that the additional day be designated as a fixed public holiday and employees required to work on that day be entitled to the normal pay enhancements for working on a public holiday.

### **Financial Implications**

- 17 Information is not readily available on the likely additional cost of an additional public holiday for the workforce as a whole. However, estimates prepared by Finance Department as part of the Modernising Pay project indicate the cost of an additional public holiday for the 'Red Book' employee group (approximately 16,000 of the 19,500 workforce) would be in the region of £320k.
- 18 If an additional day's leave was granted instead, normal public holiday enhancements would not apply and a lesser cost in the region of £250k would be incurred for the 'Red Book' employee group.

### **Environmental Impact**

- 19 None

### **Recommendations**

- 20 The Policy and Strategy Committee is recommended to:
  - a) approve Friday 29 April 2011 as a fixed one-off additional holiday for Council employees to celebrate the Royal Wedding and on condition that any employee required to work on the additional fixed holiday would receive normal pay for the day and have a substitute paid leave day to take at an appropriate future date;
  - b) note that the Scottish Government has approved a reduction in the school year to 189 days in the event that a fixed one-off additional holiday is approved.

Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. COSLA Circular SJC/41 – Royal Wedding</li><li>2. Short summary of time off arrangements in other organisations</li></ol>
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Wards affected	None
Single Outcome Agreement	Supports National Outcome 15 – ‘Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs’ Supports Local Outcome – ‘Our services are continually improving and efficient’
Background Papers	None

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21 January 2011

Dear Chief Executive

**SJC/41**  
**ROYAL WEDDING HOLIDAY**

1. The UK Government and Scottish Government have announced that there will be an additional one off public holiday on Friday 29 April 2011 to celebrate the wedding of His Royal Highness Prince William and Miss Catherine Middleton.
2. Councils that choose to recognise the event may do so by granting either an additional public holiday or an additional day of annual leave. If a public holiday is awarded then anyone required to work on 29 April 2011 should be recompensed in accordance with the relevant local arrangements in place for public holiday working. If an additional day of annual leave is awarded then employees required to work on 29 April 2011 will be entitled to time off in lieu at an appropriate later date.
3. Employers' Guidance Note 01/2011 provides further guidance on the associated issues which councils will wish to consider in their workplace.

Yours sincerely

TOM YOUNG (COSLA)  
DOUGLAS BLACK (UNISON)  
ALEX McLUCKIE (GMB)  
JACKSON CULLINANE (UNITE)  
Joint Secretaries

To: Chief Executives  
Directors of Personnel

**SHORT SUMMARY OF ROYAL WEDDING TIME-OFF ARRANGEMENTS**

<b>Public sector organisation</b>	<b>Royal Wedding arrangements</b>
Glasgow City Council	Adopted as a public holiday, relevant public holiday working enhancements will apply for staff required to work on the day
Aberdeen City Council	As above
Councils in England and Wales	As above
Scottish Government	As above
Scottish Parliament	As above
Other Scottish Councils	The majority of Councils intend to grant an additional day's leave
Highland and North Ayrshire Councils	Normal working day
NHS Scotland	Under consideration