

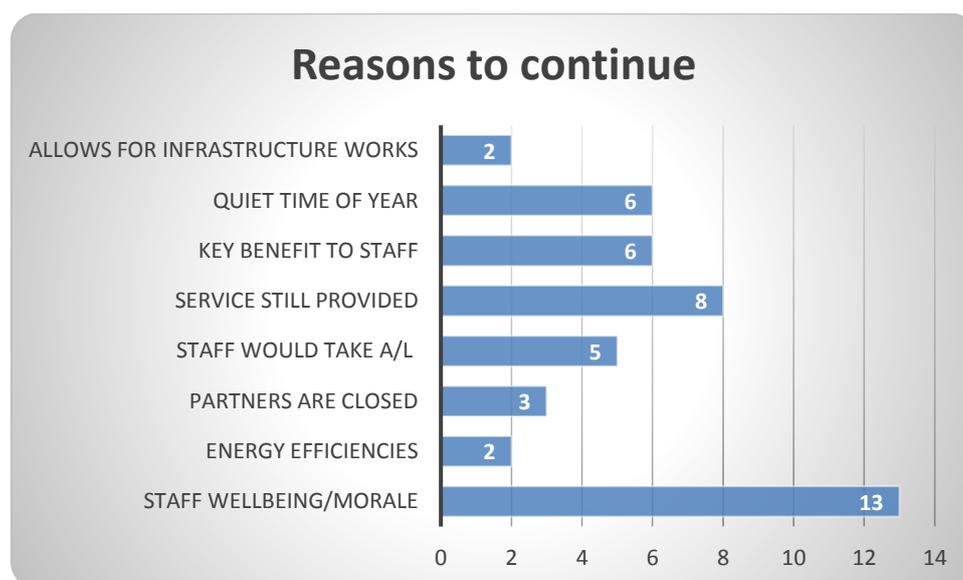
Consultation

There has been a large amount of consultation on this issue in the past, the arrangements have been in effect for 18 years, all of which has overwhelmingly supported them. However, to check current views, a very brief survey was distributed to Service Managers on the 9th January 2020, asking four basic questions:

1. Do you believe that the Christmas closure should continue?
2. If Yes, please give no more than three reasons as to why?
3. Have you had negative feedback from customers? If so, provide details
4. Do you believe the closure has a negative impact on service delivery?

Service Managers were given a short turnaround deadline for responses, (4 working days) and there was an 88% response rate. All responses were resoundingly in support to continue the current arrangements over this period. The responses were as follows:

1. Do you believe that the Christmas closure should continue? **Yes – 100%**
2. If Yes, please give no more than three reasons as to why? **See table below**
3. Have you had negative feedback from customers? If so, provide details **No – 100%**
4. Do you believe the closure has a negative impact on service delivery? **No – 100%**



As you can see the key message from Service Managers for the Christmas/New Year arrangements is that they support employee wellbeing and morale and as we continue to go through change, this benefit is seen as a motivational and support tool for employees.

The arrangements are considered an attraction mechanism for new employees, particularly those from the private sector, where we cannot offer competitive salaries.

The key message for members and our customers is that the Council is not closed. All key and statutory services are still provided, and some employees still keep an eye on their mailboxes to ensure that any issues requiring immediate action are attended to.

Some commented that as partner offices/agencies/contractors were not working over this period there would be very little productivity for some teams and by not opening the offices during this period energy efficiencies could be gained.

If the arrangements are not continued, there is likely to be loss of morale, staff wellbeing will be affected, employees will have more leave to take at busier times of the year, issues may arise in teams over who may or may not take annual leave over the Christmas period.