

7.3. END OF YEAR CLOSEDOWN 2027

REPORT AUTHOR	Manager People Safety and Culture
EXECUTIVE	Chief Executive Officer
DEPARTMENT	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
TEAM	People Safety and Culture
DATE	29 September 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Council endorses the end of year closedown for 2026-2027 for Council administration centre, operational staff, libraries and community centres from 4pm Friday 18 December 2026 up to and including Sunday 3 January 2027;**
- 2. Council endorses the end of year closedown for 2026-2027 for the swimming pool and tourist park from 12pm Thursday 24 December 2026 up to and including Saturday 26 December 2026 and 1 January 2027; and**
- 3. Council approves the Chief Executive Officer to advertise the closures and the relevant contact details for customer requests over this period.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council implements an annual shutdown period over the Christmas and New Year holidays. This report seeks Council's endorsement of the proposed closure dates for Council facilities and operations during the 2026/27 end of year period.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

At the Ordinary Meeting held 30 September 2025, it was resolved that:

- Council endorses the end of year closedown for 2025-2026 for Council administration centre, operational staff, libraries and community centres from 4pm Friday 19 December 2025 up to and including Sunday 4 January 2026;
- Council endorses the end of year closedown for 2025-2026 for the swimming pool and tourist park from 12pm Wednesday 24 December 2025 up to and including Friday 26 December 2025 and 1 January 2026; and
- Council approves the Chief Executive Officer to advertise the closures and the relevant contact details for customer requests over this period.

REPORT/BACKGROUND

Clause 55 of the Douglas Shire Council Certified Agreement (CA) provides for Council to implement a shutdown period over the Christmas and New Year holiday season. In accordance with the Agreement, all affected employees must be notified of the proposed shutdown dates by 1 October each year.

The proposed closure arrangements for Council facilities and operations during the 2026/27 Christmas and New Year shutdown period are outlined below:

Council Offices

Close 4.00pm on Friday, 18 December 2026 up to and including Sunday, 3 January 2027, reopening on Monday, 4 January 2027.

Libraries and Community Centres

Close 4.00pm on Thursday, 24 December 2026 up to and including Sunday, 3 January 2027, reopening on Monday, 4 January 2027.

For employees based in these facilities, the period of closure includes seven workdays and three public holidays.

Field-Based Operational Employees

Annual closedown for field-based (operational) employees will be from Friday, 18 December 2026 up to and including Sunday, 3 January 2027, with a return to work scheduled for Monday, 4 January 2027.

The closedown period for field-based (operational) employees includes seven workdays and three public holidays.

A skeleton structure will remain on duty at the Mossman depot. Park and roadside maintenance mowing and slashing will continue throughout the Christmas period as scheduled and appropriate.

Swimming Pool and Tourist Park

Close 12.00pm on Thursday 24 December 2026 up to and including Saturday 26 December 2026, reopening on Sunday 27 December 2026 and closing for 1 January 2027.

For employees based at the swimming pool, the period of closure will be 3 public holidays.

During this period, reservations will be available through Council's after-hours provider. In preparation for the holiday closures, reception staff will deliver advance entrance letters to ensure all incoming guests have the necessary access codes for boom gates and toilets as well as all required information.

Council's after-hours service (Nitel) will remain active in handling most enquiries; for any significant matters, a Council Officer will be available on-call for any emergency requirements.

Transfer Stations

Council's waste transfer stations will be operational as per normal operating hours on Council's website except for Christmas Day.

On-call/Emergency Response

Relevant employees will be identified and rostered for emergency situations and call outs during the closedown period.

Leave over the closedown period can be taken in any combination of annual leave, accrued Time Off in Lieu (TOIL), Rostered Days Off (RDOs), banked RDOs or leave without pay.

Advice for the Christmas closure dates will be provided to employees via all staff emails, toolbox talks and noticeboards.

Customers and the community will be advised of the closure of Council's facilities via media release, social media posts and website notifications.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Risk 5 – Strategic Workforce and Capability - Failure to provide adequate and timely advice to staff of the scheduled end of year closedown results in noncompliance with the relevant Queensland Government Award.

Strategic Risk 7 – Reputational / Political - Failure to provide adequate notice to community of the closure of Council facilities over the end of year period results in negative perceptions.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:

Theme 3 - Service Delivery

We deliver Council services effectively and efficiently to meet community expectations, focusing on the wellbeing of both the community and our employees.

3.3 - Focus on safety and wellbeing - of the community and employees.

Operational Plan 2026-2027 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Douglas Shire Council Certified Agreement

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation:

- Executive Leadership Team

External Consultation:

- Nil

CONCLUSION

The proposed Christmas and New Year shutdown arrangements are consistent with Clause 55 of the Douglas Shire Council Certified Agreement and provide for the closure of selected Council facilities and operations during the end of year holiday period.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil