

## 10.5. Council Christmas Closure 2025-26

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<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	Nil
<b>CSP LINK</b>	<b>Outcome 8 – An effective, accountable and sustainable Council that serves the community</b> G4. Manage risks and maintain independent oversight in business operations and decision-making G6. Commit to efficiency and value for money in service delivery

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for the closure of Council offices and facilities (excluding essential services) from 12pm on Wednesday 24 December until 9am on Monday 5 January, and reduced operational hours for Stanton Library.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Closure of Council facilities from 12pm on Wednesday 24 December 2025 until Monday 5 January 2026 is proposed. Stanton Library and essential services will remain operational.
- Customer Service will be closed; however calls will be directed to our out-of-hours service, and online self-service (excluding web chat) will remain available.
- Stanton Library will be closed on the public holidays and will otherwise operate with reduced hours and only the minimum staff onsite to safely operate.
- The closure is consistent with usual practice in neighbouring Councils including Willoughby City Council, Lane Cove Council, Mosman Council and Ku-ring-gai Council.
- This closure aims to support employee wellbeing and manage employee leave by providing staff with the time to rest and recharge, while still providing community access to key services.

### RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT** Council endorse the closure of Council offices and facilities (excluding Stanton Library and essential services) from 12pm Wednesday 24 December 2025 until 9am Monday 5 January 2026.
- 2. THAT** Council note reduced operating hours of Stanton Library as outlined in the report.
- 3. THAT** the community be actively informed of the closure through all available communication channels.

## Background

North Sydney Council implemented a closure over the Christmas and New Year period for the first time in 2024-25. This measure recognises the need to actively manage employee leave entitlements, prioritising employee wellbeing and work/life balance.

Feedback from staff highlighted the benefits of taking time off during this period to recharge, particularly in terms of increased energy and motivation, which in turn enhances the quality of services delivered to the community.

This period is typically a much quieter time for Council, with customer call numbers and in-person visitors historically tracking lower than average.

The Library is one of the few community facilities open during the holiday period, and there is demand from many in the local area, especially those who are vulnerable or isolated and rely on access to computers, Wi-Fi and a free, safe, airconditioned space.

## Report

The proposed closure of Council facilities (excluding Stanton Library and essential services) from 12pm on Wednesday 24 December 2025 until 9am on Monday 5 January 2026 seeks to balance the need for community access to key services with the wellbeing of our employees.

Customer Service will be closed during this time; however, residents will still have access to online services (excluding webchat), and calls will be redirected to the out-of-hours service provided by Welldone.

Stanton Library and essential services will remain operational, with reduced opening hours at the Library and only the minimum required staff onsite to cover basic service delivery.

Hours of operation for Stanton Library are summarised in the table below.

Tuesday 24 December	9am-1pm	Reduced hours
Wednesday 25 December	Closed	Christmas Day
Thursday 26 December	Closed	Boxing Day
Friday 27 December	10am-5pm	Normal hours
Saturday 28 December	10am-5pm	Normal hours
Sunday 29 December	9am-5pm	Reduced hours
Monday 30 December	9am-5pm	Reduced hours
Tuesday 31 December	9am-1pm	Reduced hours
Wednesday 1 January	Closed	New Years Day
Thursday 2 January	9am-8pm	Normal Hours

Stanton Library hours over the Christmas/New Year period 2025-26

Other NSROC councils (including Willoughby City Council, Lane Cove Council, Hornsby Shire Council, and Ryde City Council) have adopted similar closures over recent years, delivering

positive outcomes for staff wellbeing while still providing essential services. This proposal reflects these best practices and reinforces Council's commitment to fostering a healthy work environment for its employees, while ensuring key services remain available to the community.

By granting staff time off during this holiday period, Council aims to promote employee wellbeing, improve work/life balance, and foster an environment that supports higher-quality customer service throughout the year.

### **Consultation requirements**

Community engagement is not required.

Information about the closure will be widely communicated to the community through Council's social media channels, website, and newsletters as well as open hour signage at the customer service desks and the library.

### **Financial/Resource Implications**

The closure is expected to result in minimal financial impact.

The closure will assist in the management of leave entitlements, which is important for financial management of liabilities.

### **Legislation**

All leave arrangements for staff will comply with the Local Government (State) Award 2023.