

Strategic HR Forum – Discussion JSCC 21st September 2011

The impact of London 2012 Olympics on staff and resources

Why will London 2012 impact on resourcing?

The Olympic Games run from 27th July until 12th August, and the Paralympic Games from 29th August until 9th September. With the potential for a large number of staff interested in either watching the Games, attending as a spectator or volunteering, there will need to be careful planning and management of annual leave requests during our peak holiday season.

What are the timescales involved?

- Olympic Games: the majority of ticket allocations have been confirmed already, although some further tickets go on sale during winter 2011
- Paralympics Games: tickets are on sale from 9th – 26th September
- Volunteers (known as Games Makers): applicants will not find out whether they have been successful until the end of 2011
- Employees are able to start requesting annual leave for July 2012 (through Trent) from July 2011 onwards

Understanding the volume of annual leave requests

Many of the requests for annual leave may be absorbed through employee holiday entitlement, although as an employer we have the right to refuse requests as long as it is done so in good faith and on reasonable grounds. Where multiple holiday requests are received it is important for us to treat them fairly and consistently.

How many staff usually take annual leave in this period?

In preparation for this period, we have carried out some analysis on annual leave reports for the same period for 2009, 2010 and 2011. This indicates that approximately 50% of employees take some annual leave during the last week in July and first two weeks in August.

Anticipating leave requests in 2012

We have written to Heads of Service asking them to gather information on their service regarding how many additional leave requests they anticipate - for people wanting to take to attend the Olympics as spectators, or watch the games at home. We have also asked for names of any people who have applied to volunteer at the Olympics as a Games Maker – we are currently looking at the detail of how we can support potential volunteers with their leave requests.

We know that many people were unsuccessful in applying for tickets on the first attempt, Paralympic tickets have just gone on sale and there is no date yet for the first come, first served sale of any tickets thereafter unsold. Therefore it will be a while yet before we can fully understand how many tickets our staff may have obtained.

What if too many people want to take annual leave?

If we find we are expecting an unprecedented call on leave we will need to consider having some more information. To see what leave is a priority we may need to do some of the following analysis:-

- Consider whether to question people on whether they are requesting holiday to see Olympics/Paralympics or if they are requesting holiday to take time off with dependants for school holidays, or both.
- If it is just for a holiday with dependants we may ask that they try to avoid the Olympics weeks.
- Consider whether we give priority to staff requesting leave to watch Olympics over staff requesting leave for school holidays or vice versa?
- Decide whether we will we need some kind of allocation rules ie introducing an application form

Watching/Listening to Olympics at work?

As we have in the past screened major England games during the Football World Cup, we could evaluate whether this may be a good idea for London 2012. We also need to consider our position on the use of radios etc.