

## Decision Proposed to be taken by the Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning on or after 17 June 2016

### School Term and Holiday Dates 2017/18

#### Recommendation:

That the Portfolio Holder approves the school term and holiday dates for the 2017/18 academic year as set out in appendix 1.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Authority (LA) is currently responsible for setting school term and holiday dates for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. Academies, Foundation and Aided Schools are responsible for setting their own term dates. Academies, Foundation and Aided schools have generally followed the Local Authority's pattern of terms and holiday dates.
- 1.2 A number of 'guiding principles' have traditionally been used to set the pattern of terms and holidays and effort is made to adhere to as many of the following as possible:
1. 195 days from which the five teacher days are taken;
  2. Two of the five days defined by the local authority, one at the start of the autumn and spring terms; the other three to be set by schools;
  3. Complete weeks wherever possible;
  4. A three weekend break at Christmas and Easter;
  5. A summer break as close to six weeks as possible;
  6. A pattern which is as consistent as possible with neighbouring authorities.
- 1.3 Between 9th March 2016 and 24th March 2016 a consultation exercise was carried out with schools for the 2017/18 academic year on the basis of 2 options as set out in appendix 2.
- 1.4 The two options put forward for consideration differed only by the period covered by the October Half Term:

**Option 1:** October Half Term covers the period Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

**Option 2:** October Half Term covers the period Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2017 to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017.

- 1.5 Some 81 responses were received; 25 via email and 56 through the online survey. Thirty-seven were in favour of Option1, 27 in favour of Option 2 with the remaining 17 respondents not stating a preference. Over a quarter of the responses stated they were not happy with the shortness in length of the Christmas break
- 1.6 During the consultation period further discussions were carried out with neighbouring authorities to align dates as much as possible. The consultation responses are summarised fully in appendix 3. As a result of these discussions and comments received from schools Option 1 was reworked to include the following amendments:
- February Half Term was moved from the week Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018 to Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018 to the period covering Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018 to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018. Although this shortened the second half of the Spring Term to 24 school days, the measure ensured alignment with the majority of our neighbouring authorities
  - As a result of feedback received relating to the Christmas Break, the end date for the Autumn Term was moved to Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017 with pupils returning on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2017 has been earmarked as a Teacher Training day.
- 1.7 It is recommended that Option 1 with the additional amendments be adopted, as set out in appendix 1, for the 2017/18 academic year.

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Background papers:  
None

This report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Elected Member(s):

Cllr Les Caborn  
Cllr Colin Hayfield  
Cllr Dave Parsons  
Cllr Julie Jackson  
Cllr Clive Rickhards  
Cllr Chris Williams