

By:	Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills
To:	Education Cabinet Committee – 21 June 2013
Subject	Decision No. Term Dates For The School Years 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17
Classification:	Unrestricted
Future Pathway of Paper	Cabinet Member decision
Electoral Division	All

Summary:	This report informs Members of the results of the Public Consultation.
Recommendations:	Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the decision to determine the School Year dates for 2014-15 and in light of amendments made following consultation.2015-16, and 2016-17.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 KCC is responsible for setting term dates for community and voluntary controlled schools, while governing bodies of foundation and voluntary aided schools are responsible for setting their own term dates. Academies (and free schools) have the freedom to change the length of terms.
- 1.2 In previous years the Local Government Association (LGA) has coordinated the preparation of a Standard School Year draft for each year. However, the LGA has decided to stop coordinating the development of draft models for standard school years. This is because only around 40% of areas are now following the Standard School Year. The government's policies to promote academies and free schools will mean that increasingly school governing bodies will be determining the school term dates for their schools.
- 1.3 In determining the proposed future school term dates, KCC is required to consult on the proposed dates.
- 1.4 The final calendars will be determined by the Cabinet Member following consideration by Education Cabinet Committee and the agreed school term dates calendar for 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 will be published.

2. Consultation arrangements

- 2.1 KCC consulted on the proposed term dates for the academic years 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 from 11 March to 27 April 2013. The consultation was circulated to all schools via the e-bulletin and with other key stakeholders such as governors (including parent groups), the diocesan bodies, trade unions and our neighbouring authorities.
- 2.2 The proposed calendars are attached as appendix 1.

3. Responses to the Consultation

- 3.1 There were 8 responses to the consultation. A breakdown of the responses is attached as appendix 2.
- 3.2 Following consultation, the proposed dates for 2014-15 remain as originally drawn up in draft form for the consultation.
- 3.3 The proposed dates for 2015-16 have been modified slightly to address concerns identified over the positioning of the end of term 4 break. Even though the LGA recommends a two-week spring break in early April, irrespective of the incidence of the Easter bank holiday, schools felt that the Easter break should be incorporated into the two bank holidays. The changes to the proposed dates are attached as appendix 3.
- the proposed date for the beginning of Term 1 has been put back to Thursday, 3 September 2015 (from Wednesday 2 September)
 - the proposed date for the end of term 4 will be brought forward to Thursday, 24 March 2016 and conclude on Friday, 8 April 2016 (from Monday, 4 April 2016 to Friday, 15 April 2017).
- 3.4 The proposed dates for 2016/17 have been modified slightly to address concerns identified by a neighbouring authority over the positioning of the February half term and end of term 4 break.
- 3.3 The LGA recommends that there should be equal teaching and learning blocks, and a two-week spring break in early April, irrespective of the incidence of the Easter bank holiday and taking this into consideration the following changes to the proposed dates have been made and are attached as appendix 4:
- the proposed date for the end of Term 2 has been put back to Wednesday, 21 December 2016 (from Friday, 16 December)
 - the proposed date for the end of term 3 has been brought forward to 10 February 2016 (from Friday, 17 February 2017).
 - the proposed date for the end of term 4 will be brought forward to Friday, 31 March 2017 and conclude on Tuesday, 16 April 2017 (from Monday, 10 April 2017 to Friday, 21 April 2017).
 - The proposed date for end of term 6 will subsequently be brought forward to Friday, 21 July 2017 (from Wednesday, 26 July 2017).

4. Bold Steps for Kent

- 4.1 Setting school term dates contributes to meeting the following '*Bold Steps*' priority: KCC will 'ensure that the maximum number of children and young people of statutory school age are enabled to attend education provision on a full time basis.'

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct cost implications arising from the decision on the school calendar. However, if individual foundation, voluntary aided schools, academies or free schools determine a different pattern of term dates, they may incur additional costs in relation to home to school transport, as the authority passes any additional costs on to the schools concerned.

6. Equalities Implications

- 5.1 An impact assessment has been completed and is available at the following link:
<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/TermDates/consultationHome>

The conclusion following the public consultation is that the presumptions made in the initial assessment still remain and that it is not necessary to initiate a further Equality Impact Assessment.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the decision to determine the School Year dates for 2014-15 and in light of amendments made following consultation.2015-16, and 2016-17.

Background Documents:

School Term Dates 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 consultation

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/TermDates/consultationHome>

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