

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report :**

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date of Decision:	7 June 2010
Decision Title:	School term and holiday dates for 2011/ 2012
Decision Reference:	1691
Report From:	Report of the Director of Children's Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**1) Summary of Decision Area:**

- 1.1. The Local Authority must decide its school term and holiday dates, for school year 2011/12, following consultation with representatives from Hampshire County Council's Conditions of Service Working Party (CoSWoP) and with schools.

2) Issues Covered in Report:

- 2.1. The consultation process and proposed model of term and holiday dates, including the effect of the introduction of an extra bank holiday, in recognition of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, in June 2012.

3) Recommendation:

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive Member for Children's Services approves the school term and holiday dates as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, for the school year 2011/2012.

MAIN REPORT

1) Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1. To inform the Executive Member on the need to decide the pattern of school term and holiday dates for school year 2011/12 and to note the outcomes of the consultation process that has been followed.

2) Background:

- 2.1. It is the responsibility of a local authority to schedule a school year which provides the statutory 190 pupil days and 195 teacher days in voluntary controlled and community school. The structure for delivering this entitlement has been the subject of national and local debate in recent years.
- 2.2. The Local Government Association (LGA) National Standing Committee on the School Year has agreed on the implementation of a "Standard School Year" with six sessions of roughly equal length regardless of the position of Easter in the calendar.
- 2.3. Local authorities have always determined the dates of school terms and holidays independently and, despite attempts to secure national agreement, not all authorities have agreed to abide by the recommendations of the LGA. Liaison with neighbouring authorities is on-going and regular communication takes place on the setting of dates.
- 2.4. Hampshire teachers' professional associations, represented by the Conditions of Service Working Party (CoSWoP), have worked closely with officers of the local authority over several years in order to secure an agreed approach to setting dates for the county's schools.
- 2.5. Establishing more balanced term lengths with regular breaks supports an Aim of the corporate strategy, to maximising wellbeing, by helping schools and families to plan learning more effectively. Another Aim, Hampshire, safer and more secure for all, is supported by achieving agreement on dates across the county so that schools and their communities can work effectively together in school and out of school hours.
- 2.6. Achieving a proper structure to the school year contributes to all aspects of The Children Act 2004. Properly structured periods of learning and rest help children to remain healthy, enjoy their school time and achieve more. Children are safer in school and good attendance supports educational achievement laying the foundation for a positive contribution to society and economic well-being. The publication of dates well in advance enables families to plan holidays and arrange childcare so that school attendance need not be compromised.

3) Outline of Proposals:

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive Member for Children's Services approves the school term and holiday dates that are supported by

CoSWoP and are set out in Appendix 1 of the report, for the school year 2011/2012. This model is the one that has been recommended by the LGA.

4) The Current Position:

- 4.1. For the school year 2010/2011 the pattern recommended by the LGA was not followed by Hampshire. During the Autumn term 2009, when consultation on school year 2011/12 first began the LGA Standing Committee on the School Year had not met. Two options were proposed from the local conversation and a consultation with schools, ending in January 2010 was started.
- 4.2. However in late December the Government approved an extra bank holiday to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The date for the extra bank holiday was decided as Tuesday 5 June and the date Monday 4 June was also determined as a bank holiday (as oppose to the last Monday in May). This moved the summer half term holiday from the last week of May to the first week of June and constrained the flexibility around setting dates for start and end of terms. Legislation has been passed to allow teachers to benefit from the extra bank holiday; the school year therefore needs to only set 194 days. Examination boards will reschedule summer public examinations to take account of the change.
- 4.3. The LGA Standing Committee met in February to discuss the effects of the extra bank holiday and following that meeting, recommended the pattern of term and holiday dates in Appendix 1. Local Authority officers met with CoSWoP and agreed to recommend the LGA proposed pattern of dates. These dates were shared with schools, via a schools communication, to allow them to comment. The constraints and limited scope for flexibility were explained.
- 4.4. Three comments were received all advising that the schools were happy with the proposed pattern.
- 4.5. The key features of the recommended model are:
 - The Autumn term starts on Monday 5 September which starts the year with a whole week.
 - A two week, three weekend Christmas holiday is proposed.
 - The school year ends on Monday 23 July. The representatives from HCC's CoSWoP advised, in the consultation with schools, that it may be possible for schools to designate this final day as a non-contact day, i.e. pupils do not attend. Also they advised that schools could, if they wished, not require teachers to attend school on this day but use other sessions to provide the necessary in-service training.

5) Impact Issues:

- 5.1. No adverse impact in regard to race, culture, gender or disability arising from this report has been identified. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from school in order to observe religious holidays. Christmas and Easter are statutory public holidays in Britain.

6) Risk Issues:

- 6.1 None

7) Conclusions:

- 7.1. The pattern of the terms for the school year 2011/2012 has limited scope for flexibility given the location within the year of the summer half term holiday week. The proposed model for Hampshire is supported by CoSWoP, recommended by the LGA standing committee and is likely to be adopted in many other local authorities.

Section 100 D – Local Government Act 1972 – background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.

NB: the list excludes

1. Published works.
2. Documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.

8) Recommendations:

- 8.1. That the Executive Member for Children's Services approves the school term and holiday dates, that are supported by CoSWoP and are set out in Appendix 1 of the report, for the school year 2011/2012.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

LINKS TO THE CORPORATE STRATEGY			Yes	No
Hampshire safer and more secure for all		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Corporate Business plan link no (if appropriate)				
Maximising well-being		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Corporate Business plan link no (if appropriate)				
Enhancing our quality of place		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Corporate Business plan link no (if appropriate)				
OR				
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:				

OTHER SIGNIFICANT LINKS:		
Links to Previous member decisions:		
Title	Ref	Date
Direct Links to Specific Legislation or Government Directives		
Title		Date

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	