

REPORT TO CABINET

16 May 2018

Subject:	School Terms and Holidays for Academic Years 2019/20 and 2020/21
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Councillor Simon Hackett – Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Director:	Director – Education, Skills and Employment – Chris Ward
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan (28 day notice) Reference:	SMBC12/05/2018
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Councillor Simon Hackett – 21 March 2018
Director Approval:	Chris Ward – 21 March 2018
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions do not apply
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	Ward councillors have not been consulted
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Scrutiny have not been consulted
Contact Officer(s):	Paul Hayward – Team Manager, School Organisation and Development paul_hayward@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approve for publication, the schedules of school terms and holidays for the academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21, now submitted as Appendix A and Appendix B.
2. Approve that the Scheme of Delegation to Officers (Executive function) be amended to incorporate the following delegation to the Director – Education, Skills and Employment:

School Terms and Holidays

To agree and publish each year a schedule of school terms and holidays for community and voluntary controlled schools.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The local authority has a statutory responsibility to set school terms and holidays for all community and voluntary controlled schools. This report recommends schedules of terms and holidays for the two academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21 and follows liaison with all West Midlands authorities and a period of consultation with Sandwell's Joint Union Panel. In addition, it is proposed to seek approval for future routine decisions on terms and holidays to be delegated to the Director of Education, Skills and Employment.

2 IMPLICATION FOR THE COUNCIL'S AMBITION

- 2.1 The recommendation in this report supports the desire of the council to focus resources on the specific needs and aspirations of the community. This contributes to the Council's Vision 2030 Ambition 1 – Raising aspirations and resilience, Ambition 3 – Young people to have skills for the future, Ambition 4 – Raising the quality of schools.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 In order to support consistency across the West Midlands region, a West Midlands officer group meets annually to agree a recommended pattern of school terms and holidays for their respective community and voluntary controlled schools. In January 2018, the group met to agree two academic years of terms and holidays and these are shown in Appendix A (for 2019/20) and Appendix B (for 2020/21). These schedules have either been published or agreed for recommendation in all authorities across the West Midlands.

- 3.2 The Joint Union panel has considered the options for both academic years and all unions have responded in support of the schedules shown in Appendix A and Appendix B.
- 3.3 In order to improve efficiencies around the agreement and publication of terms and holidays, it is proposed to reduce the burden on Cabinet business by delegating future routine agreements to the Director of Education, Skills and Employment. This follows the normal procedure adopted by the majority of local authorities across the West Midlands.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Terms and holidays continue to be agreed with full liaison with neighbouring local authorities. The majority of those Sandwell schools already able to set their own term dates (academies, voluntary aided and trust schools) have, over the years, continued to follow the local authority set dates and this also seems to be the trend in neighbouring authorities.
- 4.2 A schedule of school terms and holidays for community and voluntary controlled schools has routinely been the subject of a report to Cabinet each year. This always follows a period of liaison with all West Midlands local authorities and a period of consultation with trades unions, the priority being to support a consistent approach across the region.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 5.1 The Local Authority consulted with all trades unions on the recommendations of the West Midlands officer group.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 Alternative school term patterns could be considered but would mean that Sandwell's terms and holidays would be inconsistent with all other local authorities across the West Midlands.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 No strategic resource implications have been identified

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Under Section 32 of the Education Act 2002, the local authority is responsible for setting school term dates for controlled and voluntary controlled schools. This is carried out within the statutory framework whilst at the same time working towards consistency with neighbouring authorities.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for this proposal. Local authorities (LAs) continue to have a statutory duty to set a schedule of terms and holidays for community and voluntary controlled schools each year carried out within the statutory framework whilst at the same time working towards consistency with neighbouring authorities.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 There are no data protection implications in this report.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder issues relevant to this proposal.
- 11.2 The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with and a risk assessment is not required for this proposal as Local Authorities have a statutory duty to set a schedule of terms and holidays for community and voluntary controlled schools each year. Based on the information provided, it is the officers' opinion that there are no current "red" risks that need to be reported with regards to this proposal.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

- 12.1 The proposal is sustainable as it is consistent with neighbouring authorities and in line with statutory requirements.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 13.1 This proposal supports a consistent approach to the setting of terms and holidays so that parents and staff have the same or very similar holidays with schools across the region.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

- 14.1 There are no impacts on any council managed property or land in the event of these proposals being approved or not approved.

15 **CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 15.1 The recommendation follows liaison with all neighbouring local authorities and consultation with the Joint Union Panel. It supports consistency across the region and will be of particular value to parents and school staff as it provides certainty in relation to term dates up to 2021.
- 15.2 The delegation of future decisions on terms and holidays to the Director of Education, Skills and Employment will remove the burden from Cabinet of what is typically a routine decision following full liaison with neighbouring local authorities and trades unions. It will also enable an earlier publication date of terms and holidays which is of particular value to parents and staff. It is therefore proposed that the Cabinet Member with current responsibility for making the decision relinquish this power and amend the Scheme of Delegation to Officers (Executive function) to enable the Director of Education, Skills and Employment to make decisions on school term holidays.

16 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None

17 **APPENDICES:**

The proposed schedules for the academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21 are attached as Appendix A and Appendix B respectively and have been shared with the Joint Union Panel as part of the consultation exercise.

Chris Ward
Director – Education, Skills and Employment