

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION

by

County Councillor Arwel Jones, Portfolio Holder for Education

Date: June 2015

**REPORT AUTHOR: Gareth Jones
Senior Manager: Central Support Services**

SUBJECT: School Term Dates 2016-17

REPORT FOR: Decision

Summary

Under the Education (Wales) Act 2014 the term date setting process in Wales was changed, requiring local authorities and the governing bodies of voluntary aided and foundation schools to work together when setting term dates in an effort to harmonise dates across Wales. A draft school calendar for 2016-17 for all Powys maintained schools was produced in discussion with the School Calendar Working Group, which comprises representative headteachers from each sector plus a Diocesan Authority representative. Following circulation to headteachers and governing bodies for comment, the draft calendar was forwarded to Welsh Government for approval.

Welsh Government collated term dates sent in from all local authorities and found that dates were not harmonised as required by the Education (Notification of School Term Dates) (Wales) Regulations 2014. Welsh Government subsequently consulted on whether Ministers should use their powers to harmonise term dates and proposed that the following term dates should apply to all maintained schools across Wales for 2016-17 (195 days in total):

First day of school year	Thursday 1 st September 2016
Autumn half-term holiday	Monday 24 th October to Friday 28 th October 2016
Christmas holiday	Monday 19 th December 2016 to Monday 2 nd January 2017
Spring half-term holiday	Monday 20 th February to Friday 24 th February 2017
Easter holiday	Monday 10 th April to Friday 21 st April 2017
Summer half-term holiday	Monday 29 th May to Friday 2 nd June 2017
Last day of term	Friday 21 st July 2017

The outcome of the consultation exercise is still awaited but it is anticipated that the term dates proposed by Welsh Government will be implemented.

The Authority has always identified the 5 non-pupil days to avoid increasing the Authority's transport costs. However, schools who wish to vary a non-pupil day into a pupil day are able to do so on the basis that it must involve all the schools in a particular high school catchment area. It is recommended that the Authority should continue to be prescriptive regarding identifying non-pupil days as not to do so would have a significant impact on both the Schools Service and school budgets.

The views of the School Calendar Working Group were sought on the dates to be identified as non-pupil days during 2016-17 and the following were agreed:

Thursday 1st September 2016
Friday 2nd September 2016
Tuesday 3rd January 2017
Friday 17th February 2017
Friday 7th April 2017 (Directed Teacher Day)

A copy of the draft school calendar 2016-17 including the 5 non-pupil days is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Proposal

- (1) That the draft calendar is approved as the school calendar for 2016-17.
- (2) That the School Calendar Working Group meet during the Autumn Term 2016 to formalise draft school calendars for 2017-18 and the subsequent two years

One Powys Plan

Whilst the recommendation does not relate to a specific improvement objective within the One Powys Plan there is a strong resonance with both the Learning and Community and Council themes.

Options Considered/Available

The Working Group considered different options for the timing of the 5 non-pupil days.

Preferred Choice and Reasons

The preferred choice is to approve the draft school calendar as it meets the Welsh Government requirement for school calendars to be harmonised across Wales. Not to identify non-pupil days would have a significant impact on the costs of home to school transport.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

Not applicable to this report

Children and Young People's Impact Statement – Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Not applicable to this report

Local Member(s)

All schools are affected therefore all Local Members have an interest.

Other Front Line Services

Not applicable to this report

Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, BPU)

Finance Comment – ‘Finance are content with the dates included in the calendar for schools’

The Professional Lead-Legal supports the recommendation proposed in this report and the legal services section will advise and assist when required.

Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

Not applicable to this report

Corporate Communications

The report is of public interest and requires proactive news release and use of social media to publicise the decision.

Statutory Officers

The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments made by finance

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has made the following comment: “I have nothing to add to the report”

Members’ Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If the portfolio holder has an interest he should declare it, complete the relevant notification form and refer to report to Cabinet for decision.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
1. That the draft calendar set out in Appendix 1 to the report is approved as the school calendar for 2016-17	To meet Welsh Government requirements
2. That the School Calendar Working Group meet during the Autumn	

Term 2016 to formalise the draft school calendars for 2017-18 and the subsequent two years	
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Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y / N	Within Budget:	Y / N

Relevant Local Member(s):	None
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Gareth Jones
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	

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Background Papers used to prepare Report:

The Education (Wales) Act 2014

Education (Notification of School Term Dates) (Wales) Regulations 2014

APPENDIX 1

Gwasanaeth Ysgolion / Schools Service 2016 - 2017 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Autumn Term 2016	Non-Pupil Days	No of School Days
Monday 5 th September to Friday 21 st October	Thursday 1 st September Friday 2 nd September	37
Half Term – Monday 24th October to Friday 28th October		
Monday 31 st October to Friday 16 th December		35

Spring Term 2017	Non-Pupil Days	No of School Days
Wednesday 4 th January to Thursday 16 th February	Tuesday 3 rd January Friday 17 th February	34
Half Term – Monday 20th February to Friday 24th February		
Monday 27 th February to Thursday 6 th April	Friday 7 th April <i>Directed Teacher Day</i>	30

Summer Term 2017	Non-Pupil Days	No of School Days
Monday 24 th April to Friday 26 th May		24
Half Term – Monday 29th May to Friday 2nd June		
Monday 5 th June to Friday 21 st July		35

Good Friday:	Friday 14 th April 2017
Easter Monday:	Monday 17 th April 2017
May Day Bank Holiday:	Monday 1 st May 2017
Spring Bank Holiday:	Monday 29 th May 2017
Royal Welsh Show:	Monday 24 th July to Thursday 27 th July 2017

Non-pupil days may be varied into alternative dates within a school year, other than pupil school days, subject to a minimum of one term's notice to the Head of Schools.

If schools wish to vary a non-pupil day into a pupil day, this change can only operate on a catchment basis and must involve all the schools in a particular high school catchment area to avoid increasing the Authority's transport costs.

The calendar allows for 190 school days and 5 non-pupil days in line with legal requirements.

This calendar is subject to any changes that may arise as a result of Welsh Government policy decisions. Powys County Council does not accept liability for any losses incurred in respect of altered holiday arrangements following such changes.