

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Agenda item:

Page no:

Meeting:	Education Consultative Forum
Date:	24 September 2003
Subject:	School Term Dates for 2005-06
Key Decision:	Not applicable
Responsible Chief Officer:	Interim Director of Education
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Education and Lifelong Learning
Status:	Part 1
Ward:	N/A
Enclosures:	None

1. Summary

The Education Consultative Forum annually agrees the term dates for each school year following consultation. It is proposed that a working group be convened to undertake the annual consultation on term dates and to seek views on a standard school year from 2005-06 onwards.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To agree a timetable and process for consulting on school term dates for the school year 2005-06, including the adoption of a move towards a standard school year.

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors

Not applicable.

4. Policy Context (Including Relevant Previous Decisions)

- 4.1 Each year the Harrow Teachers' Consultative Committee (HTCC), in liaison with the LEA, undertakes a full consultation with partners on term dates for each school year. The result of this consultation is presented to the Education Consultative Forum as a recommendation for adoption.
- 4.2 The Education Consultative Forum on 26 June agreed the term dates for the 2004-05 school year.

5. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 We will promote Harrow as a centre of lifelong learning by offering the highest quality education service, by raising aspirations and outcomes of achievement, and by providing activities for cultural, artistic and leisure pursuits which reflect the profile and the interests of all local communities.

6. Background Information and options considered

- 6.1 Since February 2002 the Association of London Government (ALG) has been liaising with all London Chief Education Officers to move towards a Standard School Year following the proposals outlined in the Local Government Association's (LGA's) Independent Commission report on the Organisation of the School Year.
- 6.2 In the Autumn Term 2002 the LGA put forward a proposal relating to the possible introduction of a 6 term year across the country.
- 6.3 In July 2003 the ALG's Education Steering Group considered proposals aimed at improving co-ordination of term dates across the London Boroughs and has agreed to assist this process by taking a role in recommending term dates for London for 2005-06 onwards. The ALG is therefore surveying all London Boroughs for a response by the end of September 2003 to:
- ascertain their 'in-principle' position on:
 - adopting the Standard School Year;
 - adopting just the element of the Standard School Year proposals that would involve fixing the two week 'Easter' break, so that it is not determined by where the Easter bank holiday weekend falls;
 - encourage full consultation on the standard school year proposals, including fixing of the Easter break, and to take Member-level decisions representing their borough's position;
 - request detail of any concerns with the above proposals.
- 6.4 It is anticipated that following consultation the ALG will make a recommendation on terms dates for 2005-06 school year in November / December 2003.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Consultation for the term dates for the 2005-06 school years has not yet commenced.

7.2 It is proposed that a working group be convened, comprising Members, headteachers, governors, trades union representatives and officers to undertake a wide ranging consultation with all stakeholders and partners.

7.3 The outcome of the consultation, with recommendations, to be presented to Cabinet for a decision as soon as is practically possible.

8. **Finance Observations**

8.1 None.

9. **Legal Observations**

9.1 Section 41 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 obliges the LEA to determine the dates when school terms and holidays are to begin and end and the times of school sessions for all community schools. For voluntary aided schools the responsibility rests with the Governing Body.

10. **Conclusion**

10.1 To respond to the LGA survey advising that Member level decision has yet to be taken in relation to the standard school year and the fixed Easter break.

10.2 To consult widely on the above proposals and to report on recommendations following consultation as early as is practicable.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 Minutes of the 26 June 2003 Education Consultative Forum.

12. **Author**

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