

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	24th November 2011
DIRECTOR	Annette Bruton
TITLE OF REPORT	Queen's Diamond Jubilee Bank Holiday – Tuesday 5th June 2012
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/11/067

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek the approval of the Education, Culture & Sport Committee to:
(1) close schools to pupils and staff on Tuesday 5th June 2012, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Bank Holiday; and
(2) move the planned school in-service training day on Tuesday 8th May 2012 to Monday 4th June 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. To instruct officers to request from the Scottish Government an exceptional closure day for schools, so that staff and pupils can benefit from the additional Bank Holiday for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on Tuesday 5th June 2012.

2. To approve the proposal to move the 8th May in-service training day for school staff to Monday 4th June 2012, allowing pupils to benefit from the four day weekend to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Schools are required to remain open for a minimum of 190 days per year. However Scottish Ministers are permitted to make modifications to this regulation, providing they are satisfied it would be unreasonable for the regulation to apply.

Should the local authority wish to close schools for an additional day on 5th June 2012, it will be necessary to write to Scottish Ministers to request this.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

In March 2010, the First Minister confirmed that the additional bank holiday to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on 5th June 2012, previously announced by the UK Government, would apply to Scotland.

It is a matter for each local authority to determine whether or not schools are closed for Bank Holidays. The Committee is therefore requested to consider approving the closure of schools for this additional day, Tuesday 5th June, allowing staff and pupils to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee.

The First Minister also confirmed that the late May Bank Holiday, originally due to take place on 28th May, would be moved to Monday 4th June, to allow for a four day weekend to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee.

The late May Bank Holiday is not currently a closure day for schools, however, so Monday 4th June would be a normal school day for staff and pupils. If the Committee were to agree to the additional closure day on 5th June, this would require pupils to attend school as normal on Monday 4th June, to remain at home on Tuesday 5th June, and to return to school again on Wednesday 6th June. This may create difficulty or inconvenience for some parents, and it would not provide pupils with a four day weekend to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee, as had been intended by the Scottish Government.

It is therefore proposed that, in addition to the approval of the closure day on Tuesday 5th June, the planned in-service training day for school staff on Tuesday 8th May 2012, is moved to Monday 4th June. This would allow pupils to remain at home for both the 4th and 5th June, and would provide them with the four day weekend.

In considering this proposal the Committee is reminded of the principles adopted when producing the current holiday arrangements, namely:

1. There is a need to establish a holiday pattern that avoids schools opening during public and local holidays.
2. Whole weeks of holiday and school term time are preferable to incomplete weeks
3. In any school year, the stipulated number of attendances for pupils is 190 days and the number of working days for teachers is 195 days, the additional 5 days for teachers being in-service days.

6. IMPACT

We require to advise parents and families as soon as possible of any additional closure days, so that they can make arrangements accordingly.

Parents have already been advised of the in-service day that was planned to take place on Tuesday 8th May. This was to follow the Bank Holiday on Monday 7th May, which will be a closure day for schools. It is possible that some families will have made plans for these two days, as they will have been expecting pupils to be at home for both days. Moving the in-service day to the 4th June could have an adverse impact on these plans, as pupils would now be required to attend school on 8th May.

An early decision on the above proposals is therefore requested, so that parents can be informed of the changes as soon as possible.

Officers' plans for professional development activities on the 8th May in-service training day are at an early stage, and would not be adversely affected by a change of the date to the 4th June.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen City School Terms and Holiday Dates 2010 – 2015

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education_learning/schools/scc_SchoolHols.asp

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Andrew Jones
CPD Coordinator
ajones@aberdeencity.gov.uk
522886