



Walsall Council

Schools Forum

Tuesday 16 January, 2024

Membership and Constitution Update

1 Purpose of Report

To ensure that Schools Forum membership complies with the *Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012*.

2 Recommendations

That Schools Forum:-

- 2.1 Considers a request from a member of Forum to update the Constitution by adding the following wording under 'Substitutes':-

For bodies nominating more than one member, each substitute shall form a pool and able to represent any nominated member so long as they are from the same category and phase of education.

Notes that:-

- 2.2 The Primary, Nursery and Special Forum has confirmed membership and substitutes for a period of 4 years, as follows:-

Representative	Substitute	Term of office expires
Amanda Arnold (Primary)	Vacant	11.01.2027
Cathy Draper (Primary)	Vacant	
Donna Probert (Primary)	Vacant	
Margaret Turley (Nursery)	Vacant	

- 2.3 Confirmation from the Primary, Nursery and Special Forum as to the reappointment of Max Vlahakis and Sean Davies is expected but not yet received. In the absence of confirmation, their terms of office shall expire in June 2024.

- 2.3 The Walsall Association of Secondary Heads has confirmed membership and substitutes for a period of 4 years, as follows:-

Representative	Substitute	Term of office expires
Billy Downie	Luke Salkeld	23.10.2027
Andy Seager	Kerry Solway-Blower	
David Smith	Kate Hibbs	
James Ludlow	Vacant	
Vacancy	Vacant	

- 2.4 The Alternative Academy representative has confirmed membership and substitutes for a period of 4 years, as follows:-

Representative	Substitute	Term of office expires
Chris Bury	Vacant	11.10.27

- 2.5 The clerk will undertake to arrange elections for Governor representatives and substitutes for a period of 4 years.

- 2.6 Membership of the Schools Forum will next be reviewed in June, 2025.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 *The Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012* state that, “An authority may determine that the number of members representing schools in a particular school category must be broadly proportionate to the total number of schools in that category when compared with the total number of schools.”
- 3.2 Walsall Schools Forum has been operating on the principle that its membership is split on the basis of pupil numbers in each group from Reception to Year 11. The split is between the defined groups of maintained secondary, maintained primary and academy as per Table 1, and is also analysed on a primary and secondary basis as per Table 3.
- 3.3 The Schools Forum Regulations provide a framework for the appointment of members, but allow a considerable degree of discretion in order to accommodate local priorities and practice. The *Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide (2017)* confirms that there is no maximum or minimum size of a schools forum.
- 3.4 At its meeting held on September, 2018 the Forum reviewed its membership noting that the *Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide (2017)* issued after this meeting by the Educations & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is clear that the membership structure of the Schools Forum should ensure that there is sufficient representation of each type of schools member in each group to ensure that debate within the schools forum is balanced and representative.
- 3.5 At its meeting on 26th June, 2019, Schools Forum was advised that an alternative provision free school known as The Ladder had opened. There were no other schools within the Borough under this category and the Clerk was instructed to notify the proprietor body of The Ladder School of the opportunity to nominate a person to join Schools Forum. The Principal, Mr. Chris Bury, Principal, accepted the offer and nominated himself on behalf of his school.
- 3.7 At its meeting in June 2023, Schools Forum agreed that, to reflect the school population, membership be amended by reducing maintained primary membership representation by 1 and increasing primary academy representation by 1. This reduced the number of Maintained Primary Governor positions from 3 to 2 and introduced an Academy Primary Governor (x1).

4.0 Substitutions

- 4.1 In July, 2022, Schools Forum approved an update to its constitution in respect of substitutions an extract of which is set out below:-

Substitutes

Each body nominating a member is entitled to nominate a named substitute member for each member that they nominate, provided the substitute is from the same membership category and phase of education.

Bodies nominating substitute Members should be nominated according to the same method used for nominating members and for the same period of office (unless a vacancy occurs 'mid-term' in which case they will be appointed for the remainder of the term of office).

Notice of a substitute member must be given in writing to the Clerk at least 24 hours in advance of the relevant.

A substitute member may only attend the relevant meeting for which they have been nominated.

Substitute members will have voting rights as identified in regulation for their constituent group.

It is the responsibility of the relevant member to arrange for a substitute to attend in place of a member, or if they are unable to do so, for the body that nominated them to do so.

- 4.2 A member requested that this be reviewed to enable a pool of nominated substitutes for each membership category and phase of education. It is suggested that this would increase the probability of substitutes being available to attend in the absence of the nominated members.
- 4.3 Should Schools Forum agree to this repose, the Constitution would need to be amended as follows (suggested additions in bold):-

Substitutes

*Each body nominating a member is entitled to nominate a named substitute member for each member that they nominate, provided the substitute is from the same membership category and phase of education. **For bodies nominating more than one member, each substitute shall form a pool and able to represent any nominated member so long as they are from the same category and phase of education.***

Bodies nominating substitute Members should be nominated according to the same method used for nominating members and for the same period of office (unless a vacancy occurs 'mid-term' in which case they will be appointed for the remainder of the term of office).

Notice of a substitute member must be given in writing to the Clerk at least 24 hours in advance of the relevant.

A substitute member may only attend the relevant meeting for which they have been nominated.

Substitute members will have voting rights as identified in regulation for their constituent group.

It is the responsibility of the relevant member to arrange for a substitute to attend in place of a member, or if they are unable to do so, for the body that nominated them to do so.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Based on the current membership, the numbers of members representing schools in a particular school category will be broadly proportionate to the total number of schools in that category when compared with the total number of schools.

6.0 School Improvement

- 6.1 There are no issues directly arising from this report.

7.0 Voting

- 7.1 All members of Schools Forum.

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