



Schools Forum

Wednesday 19 September, 2018

Review of Schools Forum Constitution and Membership

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To agree the revised Constitution of the Forum following the review of Schools Forum Membership report presented to and agreed at the meeting on 26 June 2018, and to receive a breakdown of Schools Forum members' attendance at meetings from September 2016 to June 2018, as requested by the Chair.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That Schools Forum:-

- i. agree the revised Constitution as set out at appendix 1;
- ii. note the appointments made by Primary, Nursery & Special schools (PNS);
- iii. note members attendance at Schools Forum meetings from September 2016 to June 2018;
- iv. note the Clerk to Schools Forum to write to all proprietor bodies of Primary Academies to seek nominations;
- v. note that Membership of Schools Forum shall next be reviewed in June, 2019.

3.0 Background

3.1 At its meeting of 26 June, 2018 members considered a report to review Schools Forum membership.

3.2 The Forum agreed the following changes to the 2018/19 membership:-

- The number of maintained secondary representation be reduced by one;
- The number of secondary academy representation be increased by one

The changes to the Constitution reflect a decrease in the proportion of pupils attending maintained secondary schools and an increase in the proportion of pupils attending secondary academies at the date of the May 2017 school census.

3.3 Prior to its meeting in June 2018, PNS requested nominations for Schools Forum members and the following representatives were elected:-

- Special School - Christine Fraser
- Nursery School - Margaret Turley
- Primary Schools - Max Vlahakis, Cathy Draper, Sean Davies, Michelle Sheehy and Jenny Garratt
- Primary Academies - Natalie Boyes

3.4 A vacancy remains for a Primary Academy Head and therefore the Clerk to Schools Forum will write to all the proprietor bodies of all primary academies within the local authority's area to seek a further nominee.

3.3 Schools Forum also requested a breakdown of Member attendance over the past two years – see appendix 2. For clarification, the Constitution states '*Any member failing to attend meetings for a period of 6 months shall cease to be a member*'.

4.0 **Financial Implications/Value for Money**

None.

5.0 **Legal Implications**

Based on the recommended 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**

There are no issues directly arising from this report.

Author

Beverley Mycock
Democratic Services Officer
01922 654762

WALSALL SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION

Introduction

Section 43 of the 2002 Education Act, requires Local Education Authorities to establish a Schools Forum to represent governing bodies and head teachers of local education authority maintained schools. As a result of the Schools Forum (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005, the role of Schools Forums has been expanded to include powers to allow their Local Education Authority to increase the amount of central expenditure they are able to hold according to the regulations by approving:-

- Changes to the Central Expenditure Limited;
- Prudential borrowing;
- Premature retirement and redundancy costs;
- SEN transport;
- Combined budgets;
- Schools' contingency funding.

The Schools Forum Constitution has been amended in order to comply with the Schools Forums (England) Regulations, 2012 (as amended)

Role of the Schools Forum

In addition to its decision-making function as set out in the introduction, the Schools Forum acts in an advisory capacity and is consulted by the LA on services for children.

Membership of the Schools Forum

Membership of the Schools Forum is specified within the Schools Forum Regulations 2012. Within these guidelines, the LA has determined the membership as shown below and each Group of Forum Members is required to communicate with the body they represent at least before debating major issues and again afterwards:-

Schools Members

5 Primary Heads (voting);

3 Primary Governors (voting);

1 Secondary Head or Governor (voting);

1 Special School Head (voting);

1 Special School Governor (voting);

1 Nursery Head (voting);

1 Pupil Referral Unit Head (voting);

Academies Members

5 Secondary Academy Heads (voting);

1 Secondary Academy Governor (voting);

2 Primary Academy Heads (voting);

1 Special Academy Head (voting);

(Nominated substitutes to formally take part in meetings in their absence).

Non-School Members

1 Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) representative (voting);

1 16-19 Partnership representative (non-voting).

Observers

1 Church of England diocesan representative (non-voting);

1 Catholic diocesan representative (non-voting);

1 National Education Union (non-voting);

Cabinet Portfolio holder for Children's Services (non-voting);

Education Funding Alliance (EFA) (non-voting).
(if Forum request this).

LA Representation

Local Authority attendees are restricted from participating in meetings unless they are a Lead Member, Director for Children's Services, Director for Children's Services representative or are providing specific financial or technical advice (including presenting a paper to the Forum).

Observers

The authority may also ask other observers to attend Schools Forum meetings, (these might include expert advisors on relevant issues). It can also invite any other body to do so; this would be in addition to the non-voting observers indicated.

Substitutes

Only formally nominated named substitutes can take part in meetings when the main member is unavailable.

Voting

Voting on the funding formulae is restricted to Schools Members and PVI Members only.

Each voting member will have one vote, and in the event of a tied vote, the Chairman may exercise a casting vote.

Period of Office

The period of office for head teachers and governors will run for four years (last elections June, 2018) - for re-elected Members this to be a new term of office. Any vacancies arising during this period will be appointed for the remainder of that term of office. The proportional Schools Forum membership will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

Members shall cease to be members if they cease to be representative of the organisation appointing them.

Any member failing to attend meetings for a period of 6 months shall cease to be a member.

The period of office to be staggered to maintain continuity of experienced Forum Members.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected annually at the first autumn term meeting of the Forum for a period of 12 months.

Election and Appointment of School Members

The election of primary school and special school representatives be undertaken by the primary forum, and the appointment of secondary school representatives be undertaken by the secondary forum (WASH). Confirmation of current membership to be forwarded to the Clerk on an annual basis by early September.

Academy representatives will be elected by the relevant proprietors of academies and voting will take place in the event of more nominations being received than places available.

The election of governor representatives shall be undertaken by a ballot of all governors, the ballot to take place once a year if necessary during the summer term and vacancies arising mid term to be filled from identified substitutes.

Election and Appointment of Non-School Members

The relevant organisations shall nominate representatives to the non-school members group for a term of office of 4 years and shall nominate named substitutes.

Conduct of Meetings

The Forum will meet a minimum of five times a year, with two meetings in the spring, one meeting in the summer and two meetings in the autumn.

In the event of additional meetings proving necessary, the Clerk in consultation with the Chair or in his/her absence the Vice-Chair be authorised to make the necessary arrangements.

Urgency Sub-Committee

- An Urgency Sub-Committee of five Members (quorum 3) be established comprising:-
 - 2 Head Teachers
 - 3 Governors
 - Chairman (ex-officio)
- To meet to discuss matters of urgency; urgency correspondence will be circulated to all Members and decisions taken by the Sub-Committee will be e-mailed/sent to all members and reported to the next meeting of Schools Forum;
- The Urgency Sub-Committee will comprise the first five applicable Members available to attend a meeting when contacted by telephone;
- The ex-officio member will have the right to move and second matters and vote.

Any decisions would be referred to the next meeting of the Forum for information.

Working Groups

The Forum can establish Working Groups of members to discuss specific issues and to produce draft advice and decisions for the Forum to consider. The size and membership of the Group to be determined by the Forum.

Quorum

The Forum will be quorate only when 2/5^{ths} of the total membership is present (excluding any observers) and excluding vacancies.

An inquorate meeting can proceed but cannot legally take decisions. It can respond to the Authority on consultation and give views to the Authority.

Public Access

Meetings of the Schools Forum will be held in public in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended) and its agendas, minutes and papers will be available on the Council's Committee Management and Information System.

Attendance of Portfolio Holder

The relevant Portfolio holder will be invited to meetings as an Observer with the right to speak.

Administration

Administration arrangements for Schools Forum will be provided by the Council's Democratic Services section and will provide a link between the Forum, the Chair and the Local Authority. The role of the Clerk will include:-

- Provide the route by which Schools Forum members can access further information and co-ordinate communications to Schools Forum members outside the formal meeting cycle;
- Respond to queries about the business of the Forum from head teachers, governors and others who were not on the Schools Forum themselves (this could be directing people to the web site);
- Ensuring contact details of all members are up-to-date;
- Maintain the list of members on the Forum and advise on membership issues in general;
- Assist with the co-ordination of the nomination/election processes run by constituent groups;
- Ensure the Schools Forum web site was kept up-to-date;
- Monitor on a regular basis in conjunction with the DfE, Schools Forum web sites and general schools funding site on teachernet web site and make available any relevant DfE information to Schools Forum members;
- Provide advice in relation to the operation of the Schools Forums local constitution;
- Organise, operate and record any voting activity of the Schools Forum in line with the provisions of its local constitution;
- Produce notes of each meeting as soon as possible after the meeting to enable members and others to see the outcome of any discussions and decisions/votes taken.

Forward Plan

Schools Forum will maintain a forward plan of items for future meetings.

Annual Report

An annual report on the proceedings of the Schools Forum together with a summary of the accounts will be submitted annually for the June meeting of Schools Forum.

Resources of Schools Forum

The cost of a Schools Forum will fall within the retained budget portion of the schools budget of local authorities, the average cost being £10,000 per annum.

Members Expenses

Members will be able to claim expenses for the cost of:-

Supply cover, travel expenses, loss of earnings and child care costs.

Existing Council Procedures

These will be utilised for claiming such expenses.

- ooOoo -

September, 2018.

Members	% attendance 2017 / 2018 academic year	% attendance 2016 / 2017 academic year
Mr. M. Vlahakis	66.6	66.6
Dr. A. Bruton	50	100
Mrs. C. Draper	66.6	33.3
Mrs. M. Sheehy	83.33	100
Ms. T. Coles	83.33	100
Mr. S. Davies	33.3	33.3
Mr. K. Whittlestone	16.6	50
Mr. A. Seager	66.6	n/a
Ms D. Kelly	66.6	n/a
Mr. R. Beech	50	n/a
Miss H. Keenan	50	33.3
Mrs. C. Fraser	66.6	33.3
Mr. A. Beason	33.3	n/a
Ms. L. Foster	66.6	n/a
Mr. M. Fox	66.6	n/a
Mr. F. Hodgkinson	50	83.3
Mr. B. Powell	66.6	50
Mr I. Baker	50	66.6
Ms. D. Clarke	50	16.6
Mr. S. Pritchard-Jones	16.6	50
Ms. R. Davies	0	16.6
Observers		
Cabinet Member	-	33.3
Mr. A. Orlik	50	50
Mr. J. Dwyer	-	-
Mr. R. Bragger/Substitute	66.6	100

Schools Forum held six meetings during both the 2016/17 and 2017/18 academic years