

**Report to:** Schools Forum  
**Subject:** School Forum Constitution  
**Date of meeting:** 3rd October 2012  
**Report by:** Julian Wooster – Director for Children’s Services  
**Written by:** Richard Webb - Finance Manager

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### **Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to ensure that the schools forum is constituted in accordance with the ‘The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 which come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012, and remains an effective and robust decision making forum.

### **Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that the schools forum approve the constitution attached at Appendix 1.

### **Background**

3. The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 set out how the membership of schools forums should be constituted, the requirements relating to the meetings of the schools forum and their proceedings and financial issues on which forums must be consulted.
4. The 2012 Regulations, which were laid before parliament on 7<sup>th</sup> September and which come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012, revoke the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2010.
5. These regulations reflect the changes that the Government proposed as part of the overall reform to the school funding system from the financial year 2013-14.

### **Proposed changes**

6. The main changes to these regulations relate to the membership and proceeding of schools forums.

#### **Membership**

7. The requirement that schools and Academies should have broadly proportionate representation according to pupil numbers in each category

is maintained. However, there is no longer a requirement to have a minimum of 15 people on schools forum.

8. Currently, Schools Forum has 24 members and no changes are proposed to the membership at this time. However, the membership composition will need to be reviewed again if more schools convert to Academy status.
9. In the past it has been difficult to appoint sufficient governor representatives. Therefore the constitution has been amended to allow additional head teachers from the relevant phase to be appointed in their place where it has not been possible to appoint sufficient governors.
10. The regulations clarify the arrangements in relation to the composition of the non-school members of the Forum and the constitution has been amended to reflect this. In particular, it now clarifies that Authority may not appoint any executive member or relevant officer of the authority to their forum as a non-schools member.
11. There have been no specific changes proposed in relation to the length of term membership for members of the forum. The constitution has been updated, based on the new regulations, to reflect the events that would terminate a member's membership of the forum.

#### Meetings and proceedings

12. The following constitutional criteria remain valid:
  - schools forum are required to meet at least four times per year; and
  - schools forum is only quorate if 40% of the membership are present.
13. One of the main changes under the new regulations, is that all meetings of the schools forum must be public meetings and all papers considered by the forum and the minutes of their meetings will be published on the Council's website.
14. There will also be a restriction on local authority members and officers who are not members of the Schools Forum taking part in its meetings; participation will be limited to a Lead Member for education, children's services or resources, Director of Children's Services (or their representative), Chief Finance Officer (or their representative) or officers who are providing specific financial or technical advice to Schools Forum. Other officers will be able to participate where they are presenting a report, but their participation must be limited to their specific agenda item.
15. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) has been granted observer status at Schools Forum meetings. This is intended to provide support to the local process and provide a national perspective.

16. With regards to voting, all Members are entitled to vote on all matters put to a vote. However, only school members and those who represent early years providers, are able to vote on matters relating to the funding formulae.
17. In order to reflect the complete delegation of funding for some service, the requirement to consult Schools Forums annually about arrangements for free school meals and insurance has been removed.

### **Conclusion**

18. To ensure that the schools forum is constituted in accordance with the 'The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 which come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012, it is recommended that schools forum approve the constitution at Appendix 1.