

Title of meeting: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 8 July 2019

Subject: Schools Forum Constitution

Report from: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

Report by: Angela Mann, Finance Manager

Wards affected: All Wards

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Schools Forum approval to retain the existing constitution attached at Appendix A. The report seeks to update the Schools Forum on the current composition which continues to provide for appropriate representation between maintained schools and academies within the city.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Schools Forum retains the current constitution attached at Appendix A, which took effect from 24th May 2018.

3. Background

3.1. The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), together with the '*Schools Forum: operational and good practice guide*' published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency¹, set out how the membership of Schools Forums should be constituted, the requirements relating to the meetings of the Schools Forum and their proceedings, as well as the financial issues on which forums must be consulted.

3.2. Schools Forum approved the current constitution in May 2018 and again in May 2019. Following a review of the current make up, as set out in section 4 of this report, it is proposed to retain the constitution in its current format.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2015>

4. Membership

4.1. The membership structure is required to be reviewed regularly to ensure appropriate representation is maintained; particularly where there is a change in the number of academies in the city.

4.2. Whilst there is no specified maximum or minimum size required for a Schools Forum, it is recommended that the membership should be kept to a reasonable size. The proposals below seek to retain the overall membership at 22.

School & Academy Members

4.3. The School and Academy members together must number at least two-thirds of the total membership of the Schools Forum and the balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category.

4.4. Since the last constitution was approved by Schools Forum, there have been further Academy conversions within the city so that currently there are 23 maintained schools and 38 academies.

4.5. The table below summarises the pupil numbers across the categories, (based on the October 2019 census) and shows that Academies account for 66% of the pupil population in the city.

Category	NOR maintained schools	%	NOR academies	%	NOR Total	%
Primary	6,690.00	75%	9,552.00	55%	16,242.00	62%
Secondary	1,977.00	22%	7,363.00	42%	9,340.00	36%
Special / AP	200.00	2%	467.00	3%	667.00	3%
TOTAL	8,867.00	100%	17,382.00	100%	26,249.00	100%
%	34%		66%		100%	

4.6. Whilst Academies account for 66% of the total pupil population in the city, this differs by phase as shown below.

Category	% pupils in maintained schools	% pupils in academies	Total
Primary	41%	59%	100%
Secondary	21%	79%	100%
Special / AP	30%	70%	100%

4.7. These proportions have not changed significantly since last year; therefore it is proposed to maintain the structure of the Schools Forum membership in respect of the 'School Members' and 'Academy Members', as shown below.

School Members:

Head teacher representative - primary phase	2
Head teacher representative - secondary phase	1
Head teacher representative - special phase	1
Governor representative - primary phase	1
Governor representative - secondary phase	1
Total School Members	6

Academy Members:

Primary Academy Proprietor	4
Secondary Academy Proprietor	5
Special Academy Proprietor	1
Total Academy Members	10

Total School & Academy Members	16
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4.8. The summary below shows how the schools will be represented in total by phase (both maintained and Academy).

Primary Members	7
Secondary Members	7
Special Members	2
Total School Members	16

4.9. A maintained school member must stand down from membership of Schools Forum if their school converts to Academy status, as the member will no longer occupy the office by which he or she became eligible for election.

4.10. There are no proposed amendments to the remaining membership which is as follows:

Councillors	4
Post-16 representative	1
Early Years representative	1
Total Other Members	6

5. Meetings

5.1. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic the Government has updated the Schools Forum regulations. The Schools Forum (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which came into effect on 18 June 2020

provide Schools Forum with the powers to meet remotely while they are unable to meet physically due to the Coronavirus. These powers are in place to end of the current financial year as at 31 March 2021.

5.2. The regulations set out that Schools Forum must be public meetings, which includes meetings that the public can access remotely. This includes but is not limited to telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast and live interactive streaming.

5.3. Consideration has been given regarding the impact on the current constitution of the revision to the legislation. As the constitution does not state that the meeting should be in person, but does state that the meeting should be public it is therefore considered to be compliant with the legislation and it is not proposed to update the constitution for this amendment.

6. Reasons for recommendations

6.1. The proposals within this paper are required to ensure that operation of the Schools Forum in Portsmouth is compliant with the relevant regulations and good practice guidance issued by the Department for Education.

6.2. In particular it is necessary to regularly review the Schools Forum membership to ensure that appropriate representation is made, particularly where there is a change in the number of Academies in the city.

7. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

7.1. An integrated impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not have a positive or negative impact on communities and safety, regeneration and culture, environment and public space or equality and diversity.

8. Legal comments

8.1. The form of constitution attached at Appendix A continues to reflect the requirements of the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

9. Finance comments

9.1. There are no financial implications contained within this report.

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Signed by: Alison Jeffery - Director of Children, Families and Education

Appendices:

1. Schools Forum Constitution (*including the powers and responsibilities of the Forum*)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)	The Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020
Schools Forums: operational and good practice guide	Schools forum operational and good practice guide - GOV.UK

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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 Signed by: