



Schools Forum

14 June 2017

Report from the Strategic Director of Children and Young People

For Decision

Updates to the Schools Forum Terms of Reference and Constitution

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report proposes a number of changes to the Schools Forum's Terms of Reference and Constitution. Key sections subject to changes relate to the use of substitute members, administration of meetings, minutes, quorum, task and finish groups, and observers and public access.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Schools Forum is asked to approve the proposed changes to the Schools Forum Terms of Reference and Constitution.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 As part of an agreement between the Children and Young People Department and the Chief Executive's Department, the Governance Team, part of Executive and Member Services, has been asked to take over the clerking of the Schools Forum with an aim is to provide administrative support, consistent with the principles applied to all council committee meetings.
- 3.2 An extensive review of the Schools Forum's Terms of Reference and Constitution has been undertaken in the period February 2017 - May 2017 and a number of changes are proposed to improve governance and procedures. The proposed amendments are shown in Appendix A to this report. Additions to the existing texts are underlined and deletions are indicated by crossing through. The main changes are described in the body of this report.
- 3.3 The Proposed changes to the Terms of Reference are as follows:
- (i) Changes to paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 as references to Appendices A and B are proposed to be removed. A link to The Schools Forum (England)

Regulations 2012 is available on the Schools Forum section on Brent Council's website, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

- (ii) Change to paragraph 1.4 (d) to spell out the acronym DfE – Department for Education. This is proposed to ensure that members of the public who are not familiar with educational terminology can understand fully the Terms of Reference of the Schools Forum.

3.4 The proposed amendments to the Schools Forum's Constitution are as follows:

(i) Appointment

- a. Changes to paragraph 2.2.1, first bullet point - it is proposed to add 'by the Children and Young People Department's Finance Team' to clarify who will be responsible for communicating with the Headteachers groups and eligible Headteachers.

(ii) Tenure

- a. Changes to paragraph 2.3.4 as it is proposed to amend the text to reflect the current practice of removal of members from office in case of a reduction in membership for a particular sector.

(iii) Substitutes

- a. Changes to paragraph 2.4.1 to provide for the arrangement of named substitute members to represent full members when the latter are not able to attend a meeting of the Schools Forum. It is expected that this measure will ensure that all sectors are equally represented and that meetings are quorate.

(iv) Meetings

- a. Changes to paragraph 2.5.4.2 are proposed to comply with paragraph 8, sections (2) and (13), from The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 and to reflect current practice at the London Borough of Brent.
- b. Deletion of the current paragraph 2.5.4.3 as it has been incorporated into paragraph 2.5.4.2.
- c. Introduction of a new paragraph 2.5.4.3 with the following text added 'and via the Modern.gov application' to incorporate the committee decisions management system used by the Council.
- d. Change to paragraph 2.5.4.4 to spell out the acronym LA – Local Authority. This is proposed to ensure that members of the public who are not familiar with educational terminology can understand fully the Constitution of the Schools Forum.
- e. Change to paragraph 2.5.4.6 as 'Schools Forum Forward Planner' is amended to 'Schools Forum Forward Plan'.
- f. Deletion of paragraph 2.5.5.1 to reflect the current practice of publishing minutes of meetings after they have been approved by the Schools Forum.
- g. Change to paragraph 2.5.5.2 – deletion of 'as final'.

- h. Changes to paragraph 2.5.7.2 to state that inquorate meetings cannot legally make decisions and describe procedures when a meeting is inquorate.
- i. Deletion of paragraph 2.5.7.3 as it has been incorporated in paragraph 2.5.7.2.
- j. Changes to section 2.5.10 and paragraph 2.5.10.1 to allow the Schools Forum flexibility to appoint, as and when necessary, Task and Finish Groups in relation to specific items of interest of the Forum.
- k. Deletion of paragraph 2.5.10.2 as the Governance Team will provide a clerk to the Forum.
- l. Changes to paragraph 2.5.11.1 to eliminate contradiction between the first and the second sentence of this paragraph. The second sentence has been removed. However, the Schools Forum will be able to discuss issues in private when there is a good reason for this.
- m. Deletion of paragraph 2.5.11.3 as it has been incorporated in paragraph 2.5.4.2
- n. Proposal paragraph 2.5.11.3 to become 2.5.11.1
- o. Change to paragraph 2.5.11.4 to emphasise that minutes of meetings will be published and groups notified once these have been approved.

3.5 The 'Schools Forum Terms of Reference and Constitution' document is to be reviewed at the Schools Forum meeting in June 2018.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The cost of providing a clerk to the Schools Forum will be met by the Schools Forum budget.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 These are addressed in the body of the report.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 There are no diversity implications.

7.0 Background Papers

7.1 [Schools Forum Terms of Reference and Constitution](#)
[The Schools Forums \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

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