

## SCHOOLS FORUM GUIDANCE

### 1 Overview

- 1.1 The Schools Forum is not a Committee of the Local Authority, it is a separate statutory body set up to provide a formal mechanism for schools' views on funding and other issues to be brought to the attention of the Local Authority (LA) under the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012.

### 2 Membership

- 2.1 In carrying out their duties, members of the Forum are representing the interests of their sectors rather than their individual school and should tailor their views accordingly. They are expected to act in accordance with the seven principles of public life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.
- 2.2 There will be 27 full members of the Forum, representing the following:

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b><i>Schools members</i></b>	
Primary Heads	5
Primary Governors	5
Secondary Heads	1
Secondary Governors	1
Special School Head	1
Special Schools Governor	1
Nursery School Head	1
Nursery School Governor	1
PRU Head/Governor	1
<b><i>Academies members</i></b>	
Academy Head	3
Academy Governors	3
<b><i>Non-schools members</i></b>	
Early Years PVI Sector	2
Trade Unions	1
14-19 Partnership	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>

### 3 Election

- 3.1 Each Forum member will be elected by their peer group and will serve for 3 years from the day of election
- 3.2 The election process will be carried out by the LA:

- Head Teachers and governors will be asked to nominate themselves for the Forum by a closing date of not less than one month prior to the date of the next meeting of the Forum.
  - Heads Teachers and Governing Bodies of each category of school will be sent a voting paper by the LA setting out the nominations within their peer group.
  - Each Head/Governing Body will be able to vote for the number of candidates equal to the number of Forum seats available to their peer group (e.g. each primary head may vote for up to 5 primary head candidates).
- 3.3 There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms of office individuals can serve as Forum members.
- 3.4 Elected Members of the Local Authority can be voting members of the Forum in their capacity of governor at a school.
- 3.5 The LA will end the appointment to the Forum of any Forum member who ceases to hold the office by virtue of which they became eligible for membership (i.e. a head teacher who ceases to be a head in the LA or a governor who ceases to be a governor of a school in the relevant category). In such eventuality, the LA will immediately seek nominations from the sector for a replacement to serve the remainder of the three year term and initiate the voting process.
- 3.6 If a Forum member ceases to attend three consecutive meetings, the Forum can agree (by vote) to ask the LA to remove them from membership and seek a replacement from the appropriate sector to serve the remainder of the three year term.

## **4 Meetings**

- 4.1 The Forum will elect its Chair and vice Chair from within its membership at its first meeting, if necessary by a majority of votes cast by individual members.
- 4.2 If neither the Chair nor vice Chair is present at a meeting, those representatives present shall elect a Chair for the duration of the meeting.
- 4.3 The quorum for the meeting will be 40% of appointed Forum members.
- 4.4 The Forum meetings are open to the public.
- 4.5 Anyone wishing to speak at a Forum meeting who is not a member of the Forum may only do so with the permission of the Chair, except the

Strategic Director of Children & Young People or their representative and the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People who shall be entitled to address a meeting of the Forum (through the Chair) to contribute to the discussion.

- 4.6 There shall be a minimum of 4 meetings each year.
- 4.7 Dates, times and locations of Forum meetings will be decided by the Forum at its meetings.
- 4.8 An emergency meeting of the Forum can be called by the Chair or vice Chair but must be held at least five clear working days after being called.
- 4.9 All discussion and debate at Forum meetings must be through the Chair.
- 4.10 If a vote is required, all relevant members of the Forum attending the meeting shall have one vote each (including the Chair) and in the event of a tie, the Chair shall be entitled to use their casting vote. Non-schools members except for Early Years representatives cannot vote on schools formula matters.
- 4.11 If one of the voting members on the Forum asks that the question be put to a vote, the Chair shall immediately seek a vote of the Forum members and, if a majority agree, there will be an immediate vote on the issue under discussion and the meeting will move to the next item of business.

## **5 Functions**

- 5.1 The Forum will set its own work programme, subject to the Strategic Director of Children & Young People having the right to put any report to the Forum if it covers a matter on which the LA has a statutory duty to consult the Forum (see below). The agenda for each Forum meeting will be agreed by the Chair in consultation with the clerk to the Forum and the Strategic Director of Children & Young People.
- 5.2 The Forum may commission work in relation to appropriate school funding issues.
- 5.3 The Forum shall have the right to consider and make recommendations to the Council on the following issues:
  - The Schools Budget
  - The Scheme of Delegation and any proposed changes to it
  - The funding formula and any proposed changes to it

- Arrangements for Special Educational Needs within the Schools Budget
- Arrangements for the Pupil Referral Units and out of school education
- Arrangements for early years education
- School related insurance
- Administrative arrangements for grants paid via the LA
- The funding of Free School Meals
- Service contracts to be let by the LA where the contract is paid or will be paid from the Authority's schools budget
- The schools' Asset Management Plan
- Any other financial issues affecting schools

## **6 Expenses**

- 6.1 All costs of the Forum shall be met from the Schools' Budget. The Forum shall make an estimate each year prior to the Council's budget setting process of the Forum's following year's expenditure and will keep its expenditure for that following year within that budget.
- 6.2 The reasonable costs incurred by each of the 27 members on the forum in attending meetings of the Forum shall be reimbursed by the LA and charged to the Schools Budget. These will include (where relevant) travel costs, supply cover (heads), loss of earnings (governors) and childcare. As meetings are likely to be held in the evening, it is anticipated that only travel and (possibly) childcare costs will apply.

## **7 Reporting**

- 7.1 The Forum is obliged to give schools an account of consultations carried out and action taken or not taken by the LA in consequence. It is for the Forum to decide how this feedback to schools should be given. Individual Forum members should arrange "feedback" for the sector that elected them.
- 7.2 The LA shall provide a clerk to the Forum who will minute meetings and circulate minutes and reports not less than ten clear working days before the next meeting.

## **8 Voting**

- Schools members can vote on all Schools Forum business including consultation on the funding formula. However only primary representatives can vote on primary school de-delegation, and only secondary

representatives can vote on secondary school de-delegation. Schools members, as defined previously, are primary, secondary, special, nursery and PRU representatives.

- Academy members can vote on all Schools Forum business (including consultation on the funding formula) except de-delegation, as de-delegation is not an option for academies.
- Non-school members cannot vote on de-delegation. Only Private Voluntary and Independent representatives can vote on consultation on the funding formula. All non-school members can then vote on anything else.

## **9 Other regulations**

- 9.1 All other rules and procedures of the Forum shall be set by the Forum itself.
- 9.2 Further information can be found at the following webpage:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/251521/2013\\_Schools\\_Forum\\_Operational\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/251521/2013_Schools_Forum_Operational_Guide.pdf)