

Revised Schools Forum Constitution

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the ratification of the revised Schools Forum Constitution for September 2018. The Constitution has been in a process of revision throughout 2017-2018 academic year following the publication of the DfE Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guidance (September 2017). The SF agreed on 8th February 2018 to delegate any proposed revisions to a working party of representatives which met on 10th January 2018 and 17th April 2018. Following the SF meeting on 5th June 2018, it was agreed that a further meeting of the working party or other SF representatives, would meet to agree the final proposals on Tuesday 17 July 2018.

Information and Advice

2. The constitution is underpinned by a yearly review of member representation which is finalised in relation to the number of pupils attending academies or maintained schools. In recent years, as more children and young people are educated within academies, the balance of membership has changed. This means there are now more academy representatives than maintained and this reflects the current governance arrangements across the county.

3. The proposed revised constitution reflects the DfE Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guidance published September 2017. Consolidating the advice of the Forum as well as the views of the working parties, the following specific recommendations are made:

- I. The Schools Forum constitution will be kept under review by the SF on a yearly basis. Any proposed changes require SF Members to undertake consultation within their respective networks including any area networks they may have.
- II. Nottinghamshire SF Members should primarily work within Nottinghamshire. Forum members can be Executive Headteachers, heads of school, senior leaders or Governors in relation to the makeup of the memberships. At this time, CEOs should not be considered for membership to avoid any unnecessary conflicts of interests which could arise if a CEO was based in schools in another County. Whilst the educational landscape continues to change within the County, MATs should only hold one position within any category on the Forum. This should be reviewed yearly as more schools academise. This should be kept under review as the academised sector matures and settles. (It may be that in the future, the SF makeup could be agreed at MAT rather than school level.)
- III. Schools Forum members are expected to attend Forum meetings. Substitutes can be sent once in any academic year following the completion of the proxy voting form which must be returned to the Clerk to the Forum before the meeting commences. Members who fail

to attend 3 consecutive meetings must stand down to allow the election process for a new Member to be undertaken.

- IV. The 14-19 partnership Membership should be removed and replaced by a representative of the incorporated FE sector primarily based in Nottinghamshire. (This is likely to be a representative from West Notts College)
- V. In relation to Governor representatives, there will be 5 Members of which 1 should be from a special school. When vacancies arise, the Forum should recommend the sector which should be targeted to maintain a broad balance between primary, secondary and special and maintained.
- VI. Whilst any maintained secondary schools continue, there should be a representative. (This is likely to be from Chilwell School given The Minster is in the process of academising)
- VII. The Education Governor Trust Board will oversee the nomination and election of primary, secondary and governor SF members. The chair of the Governor Trust Board will request support from NCC's Democratic Services to oversee any ballot counts. Where there is a tie arising from an election, the LA will recommend to the Board which candidate should be appointed. The LA will seek the views of the Governor Trust Board on such occasions.
- VIII. The Special School Trust Board will oversee the nomination and election of special school members. Where there is a tie arising from an election, the LA will recommend to the Board which candidate should be appointed. The LA will seek the views of the Special School Trust Board on such occasions.
- IX. Where there are more nominations than vacant places, voting will be undertaken within the relevant category with the school headteacher/head of school voting. This is a change to the previous constitution which allowed chairs of governors to vote in all categories. In this constitution, chairs of governors will only vote for governor representatives.
- X. Members identified by the Dioceses and Trade Unions are agreed with the Local Authority

4. In addition, the final working party was of the view that membership of the Forum should be time limited. Their proposal was that members would be appointed for a period of 3 years but would need to seek appointment for a further 3 years before taking a 1 year break in membership pending re-nomination and appointment. The suggestion included a transitional period ending in August 2019 for those whose membership already exceeds 6 years. In relation to the tenure of the chair and vice chair, the working party was of the view that these posts should be made initially for a 3 year period to be ratified yearly.

5. These business of the Schools Forum is complex and at times difficult. Given the relatively small number of meetings in a year, it often takes new members a period of time to internalise the workings of the Schools Forum. Schools Forum should consider carefully these two proposals to ensure that the length of tenure is neither too short nor too long.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Schools Forum:

- 1) That the Forum should confirm that the Membership of the Schools Forum should be for a specified period of time to exceed no more than x years.
- 2) That the revised Schools Constitution document, dated September 2018 be ratified.

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