

WARWICKSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Warwickshire Schools Forum was established in November 2002 as required by the Education Act 2002.

Purpose

The following powers and responsibilities relate to the Schools Forum

1. Consulted on funding formula changes, including redistributions
2. Gives a view on significant contracts to be let by the LA paid out of the schools budget
3. Gives a view on financial issues relating to the arrangements for pupils with SEN, pupil referral units, early years provision, insurance, schools meals, allocation of central government grant
4. Informs governing bodies of all consultations in connection with the above 3 areas
5. Agrees any variation to the Minimum Funding Guarantee for Early Years and consulted on any other MFG related proposals
6. Makes a decision to breach the central expenditure limit
7. Makes a decision to increase central spend on prudential borrowing, termination of employment costs, combined services, schools' specific contingency and special needs transport.
8. Changes to the schools' scheme of financial management
9. Determines the voting procedures of the Schools Forum membership and elects the Chair of the Schools Forum

The Schools Forum is an important mechanism for consultation, which augments existing consultative arrangements by bringing together the various stakeholders in the budget process to share views. It does not replace those existing arrangements.

Membership

The Forum consists of "school" and "non-school" members. School members and academy members must together comprise at least two thirds of the membership of the forum.

The membership of the Forum is as follows:

Voting Members

School members:-

6 Primary Headteachers to represent, as far as possible, the four areas of the County, voted for by headteachers from the Primary Sector

2 Maintained Secondary Headteachers, voted for by headteachers from the Secondary Sector

2 Academy Secondary Headteachers voted for by headteachers from the Academy Sector

1 Special School Headteacher voted for by the Special School Headteachers

1 Nursery School Headteacher voted for by the Nursery School Headteachers

10 members of the Governors Steering Group or Governor Patch Representatives and agreed by the Governors' Forum, which will include 2 academy representatives, 2 maintained secondary schools and 6 maintained primary schools.

Non-school Members

A representative of each of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church appointed by the Local Authority

A representative of Private, Voluntary and Independent sector Early Years nursery education providers appointed by the Local Authority

A representative of Local Authority 14-19 partnerships appointed by the Local Authority

Non-voting Members

Representatives of the teaching and non-teaching unions, the Education Funding Agency, and two spokespersons from each of the three largest parties elected to the County Council, plus any County Councillors with a portfolio specific to the areas covered by the Forum are invited to attend and may speak

Members will be appointed to the Forum for a one-year period.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected by the membership of the Forum to serve for a one-year period. Should a vacancy arise for Chair or Vice Chair the person elected to fill the vacancy will serve to the end of that period.

Frequency of meetings

The Schools Forum will meet at least four times in an academic year.

Conduct of meetings

Any member of the Forum may ask for items to be placed on the agenda of the Forum by writing to the Strategic Finance Manager (Resources and Schools).

Agendas and papers to be considered by the Forum will be sent out five working days in advance of the meeting. Late items may be considered at the discretion of the Chair. Draft minutes will be circulated within 10 working days of the meeting.

Substitute representatives may attend meetings if the appointed representative is unable to attend. Substitutes will be able to vote on behalf of the member they are representing. However, attendance of appointed representatives is strongly encouraged.

Substitutes for 'schools' representatives can be another Headteacher or senior member of staff, that is a Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, Bursar or person responsible for the financial management of a school.

Meetings of the Schools Forum will be open to members of the public who may observe but not take part. The Forum may move into private session for confidential items, which, for example identify individuals or individual schools, at the discretion of the Chair.

The Clerk to the Schools Forum will be the Strategic Finance Manager (Resources and Schools).

Voting

It is expected that most decisions of the Forum will be by consensus. If a vote is required, the decision will be by simple majority of those voting. The Chair of the Forum will exercise a casting vote in the event of a tied vote.

Only members (both school and non-school) may vote.

The quorum for the meeting is two fifths of the voting membership (11).