

## **Schools Forum**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

### **Amendment to the Schools Forum Terms of Reference**

This report is relevant to maintained and academy schools

#### **Recommendation**

The Schools Forum is recommended to:

1. Comment on the amendment to the current Schools Forum Terms of Reference to include a Traded Union representative as a non-school member.
2. Note that new elections to the Schools Forum will take place in the spring of 2013 for membership for a further 12 months

#### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This report seeks to understand the views of the current Schools Forum members to the amendment of the Terms of Reference for this Forum in Warwickshire to include a Trade Union representative as a non-schools member.

#### **2.0 Background**

2.1 The Schools Forum will be aware of the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012 that came into effect on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2012.

2.2 The main changes to these regulations were that the membership should be representative of the types of schools in which pupils are educated. Paragraph 8(4) also includes details of those who are allowed to speak during Schools Forum meetings.

2.3 The intention of the new regulations is that the Forum is representative of the pupils to which decisions are made and as such, the membership and voting rights have been changed to reflect this. As such, those who are allowed to contribute to discussions are restricted.

2.4 It was noted at the meeting in September that whilst Trade Union members were included in the Warwickshire Terms of Reference of the Schools Forum, they were no longer included in the group of representatives allowed to speak at these meetings.

### 3.0 Inclusion of Trade Unions as non-school members

3.1 Whilst it is the role of the Local Authority, according to the regulations, to decide on the membership of the Schools Forum, comments are being sought from the current membership regarding the inclusion of a Trade Union representative as a non-schools member.

3.2 This would mean that the views of unions could be heard at Forum meetings although, as with other non-school members, they would not be entitled to vote on schools funding issues.

3.3 The regulations state that the Local Authority must select one or more Early Years providers and one or more from the 14-19 partnership as non-school members. It then states that the Local Authority should consider whether it would include representatives from both the catholic and Anglican Church. Trade Unions are not noted as a group specifically that should be considered but they are also not precluded from being considered.

3.4 Schools Forum members will recall that upon election last May, the current membership was for 12 months to ensure that there was flexibility in the make-up of the group to reflect the change in school structures. The Terms of Reference would also need to be updated. Depending on the continued conversion of primary schools to academy status, it may be that the Forum will need to include a representative from this sector.

3.5 The views of the Forum would be appreciated to advise the Local Authority as to whether, when the Terms of Reference are updated in the spring in advance of a new term of membership in May, it would be beneficial for a Trade Union officer to be included as a non-school member.

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