

## **Schools Forum**

**13<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

### **Schools Forum – Constitution and Election Process for 2014-15**

This report relates to both maintained and academy schools

#### **Recommendation**

The Schools Forum is recommended to:

1. Note the required changes to the Warwickshire Schools Forum membership for 2014/15 to reflect the growth pupils attending academy schools
2. Agree to the number of head teacher and governor representatives in the maintained school sector membership as outlined in Table 3
3. Current Schools Forum members to nominate themselves for re-election, if required (excluding non-schools members)
4. Comment on the suggested process for elections to the Schools Forum for 2014/15
5. Agree that the Local Authority should facilitate the elections on behalf of the academy representatives

#### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 The Schools Forum Terms of Reference were updated in March 2013 to take account of the requirement to have academy representation on the Schools Forum.

1.2 The Terms of Reference state that the term of membership would be 12 months for head teachers and governors but that special school, nursery and non-school members term remains at 2 years. This would allow for the Forum membership to be updated as the status of schools changed. The next elections are therefore required during the next 2 months ready for the May meeting.

#### **2.0 School Members**

2.1 Membership of the Schools Forum is broken down into Schools Members and Non School Members. The current Schools membership is as follows:

Table 1

	Number of pupils (Oct 2012 census)	% of pupils	Number of Schools Forum reps for 2013/14
Primary Maintained	37,556	54.7%	11
Secondary Maintained	11,211	16.3%	3
Academy	19,890	29%	6
Nursery			1
Special Schools			1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,657</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22</b>

2.2 As of May 2014, it is expected that the breakdown of pupils will be as follows:

Table 2

	Number of pupils (Oct 2013 census)	% of pupils	Number of Schools Forum reps for 2014/15
Primary Maintained	35,583	51.6%	10
Secondary Maintained	8,523	12.4%	2
Primary Academy	5,159	7.5%	2
Secondary Academy	19,665	28.5%	6
Nursery			1
Special Schools			1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,930</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22</b>

2.3 Table 2 indicates that there needs to be a change in the number of representatives; there should be one less primary and one less secondary maintained and an additional 2 academy members, due to the expansion of academies.

2.4 The DfE has published a document "Schools Forum: Operational and Good Practice Guide". It states that academy representation does not need to be sector specific; there is not therefore a requirement that members should be made up of 2 representatives from the primary and 6 secondary schools.

2.5 Regardless of pupil numbers in the nursery and special school sectors, there should be at least one representative of these on the Forum. The Terms of Reference were amended last year to make these posts 2 years in tenure so there is no need to a re-election process of these representatives as long as they are willing to continue their membership.

2.6 Whilst table 2 above notes the number of representatives for each sector, Warwickshire historically has had both head teacher and governors in each group. The DfE Good Practice Guide notes that "it is good practice for Schools Forums to

aim for a membership structure based on an equal proportion of head teachers and governors". As such, it is recommended that a 50/50 split is retained.

2.7 Table 3 shows the potential split of head teacher and governors.

Table 3

	Proposed Number of Schools Forum reps for 2014/15	Head teacher	Governor
Primary Maintained	10	5	5
Secondary Maintained	2	1	1
Academy	8	4	4
	20	10	10

2.8 The Schools Forum is requested to agree the split of governors or head teachers in the maintained sectors.

### 3.0 Non School Members

3.1 The current Schools Forum non schools membership is as follows:

	Number of Schools Forum reps
PVI Sector	1
Church of England Diocese	1
Catholic Church Diocese	1
14-19 Partnership	1
Teachers Union	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>

3.2 There is a 2 year term of office for non-school members, all of whom were voted for only last year. Therefore, there is no need to go through a re-election process as long as the current members are willing to continue for another 12 month period.

### 4.0 Head Teacher voting arrangements:

4.1 The first stage of the voting process will be to generate nominations to be a head teacher Schools Forum member. Current members are requested to contact Sara Haslam to nominate themselves for 2014/15. An email will then be sent to all schools with a nomination form attached.

4.2 For the last 2 years, the Local Authority has facilitated the nomination and election of academy representatives. Although the guidance suggests that the Academy Trusts should agree between themselves who the Schools Forum representatives should be, there is no established structure for this to take place. As

such, the current academy representatives are requested, on behalf of all of the academies in Warwickshire, to confirm whether this assistance will be required again this year.

4.3 The process for electing head teachers will be carried out electronically and in order that the new arrangements are in place for the May meeting, the following timescales will be followed:

March 14 <sup>th</sup>	Nomination Forms emailed to all schools and academies
March 28 <sup>th</sup>	Nomination forms returned to the LA
March 31 <sup>st</sup>	Voting forms emailed to all schools and academies
April 11 <sup>th</sup>	Voting forms returned to the LA
April 28 <sup>th</sup>	Membership finalised.
May 15 <sup>th</sup>	Schools Forum with new membership

4.4 The nomination and elections of governors will be discussed and confirmed with the Democratic Services team. This will cover both maintained and academy representation.

4.5 Once the new membership has been agreed, the Terms of Reference will be amended and presented to the Schools Forum in May.

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