

**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 (voting restricted to school members plus PVI members)
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, allocation of central government grant
4. Informs governing bodies of all consultations in connection with the above 3 areas
5. Gives a view regarding the Minimum Funding Guarantee
6. Makes a decision regarding de-delegation for mainstream schools for contingencies, administration of free school meals, insurance, licences, staff costs (supply cover), support for ethnic pupils/under achieving groups, behavioural support services and library and museum services. Primary and secondary school members will make a decision for their own sector.
7. Makes a decision to retain funding for central spending on pre 16 significant pupil growth, equal pay back pay, places in independent schools for non SEN pupils and early years expenditure.
8. Decides the budget set aside for admissions, servicing of schools forum, CERA, combined budgets, centrally funded termination of employment costs, prudential borrowing and SEN transport up to a maximum committed in 2012/13.
9. Decides the carry forward of a deficit on central expenditure to the next year to be funded from the schools budget
10. Approves the Scheme of financial management changes
11. Gives a view on the length of membership of the schools forum members
12. Gives a view on membership of non-schools members.
13. Determines the voting procedures

14. Elects the chair of the Forum.

## **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:-**

5 Primary head teachers, voted for by head teachers from the Primary Sector

1 Maintained Secondary head teacher, voted for by head teachers from the Secondary Sector

4 Academy head teachers voted for by head teachers from the Academy Sector

1 Special School head teacher voted for by the Special School head teachers

1 Nursery School head teacher voted for by the Nursery School head teachers

10 members of the Governors Steering Group or Governor Patch Representatives and agreed by the Governors’ Forum, which will include 4 academy representatives, 1 maintained secondary schools and 5 maintained primary schools.

Members will be appointed to the Forum for a one-year period, except the Special School and Nursery School head teachers.

#### **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 16-19 providers appointed by the Local Authority

A representative from the Teachers Representative Panel, nominated by the panel

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

### **Non-voting Members**

The following persons may speak at meetings of the Forum, even though they are not members of the Forum: The Director of Children's Services, The Chief Finance Officer, any elected member of the authority who has primary responsibility for children's services or education, any elected member who has primary responsibility for the resources of the authority, any person invited to offer technical advice to the Forum, any observer appointed by the Secretary of State and any person presenting a paper (but their input will be restricted to this paper only)

### **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 (for any voting member) 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).

## Schools Forum reports

A Schools Forum is expected to:

- Include the authors contact details so that they can be contacted for further information before the meeting
- Be presented at the Schools Forum by the author
- Be presented in a consistent template to encourage familiarisation of data and ease decision making

As the Schools Forum is a funding decision making body, it is imperative that the financial analysis included within the reports is robust. As such, the following checks will have been undertaken before any reports are issued to the Schools Forum for consideration:

- Are there stakeholders who would have a view on this funding decision? Their views should be sought before the report is finalised and their feedback detailed in the report. Stakeholders could be head teachers, governors, local authority officers policy groups, steering groups etc.
- What are the options for allocating the DSG funding? Have all of the options been detailed? Where an approach is recommended, this should be clearly explained
- How does this funding decision change previous funding levels? Could transitional protection be applied? If so, at what level, for what period of time and how much will this cost?
- Has the wider impact on schools or the services provided to schools been considered? Is there a knock on effect of this funding decision that will impact on other provision?
- Has local or national research regarding this funding decision been taken into account? Is this referenced in the report?
- Have both revenue and capital costs been taken into account and shown clearly in the report?
- How will the funding decision impact on outcomes for children and young people in Warwickshire?
- How does this funding decision relate to the priorities of the Local Authority?
- How does this funding decision relate to any regional working?
- How does this funding decision relate to the national DSG funding direction?
- What is the impact of the funding decision on the relationship between the Local Authority 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.

Generally, only members (both school and non-school) may vote. On matters regarding schools funding, only schools members and the PVI representative may vote. On matters regarding the de-delegation of centrally retained funding, voting is on a sector basis.

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

**May 2014**