

SCHOOLS FORUM – 24 APRIL 2014

Title of paper:	Revised Membership and Constitution for Nottingham City Schools Forum
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Alison Michalska, Corporate Director for Children and Adults
Report author(s) and contact details:	Alistair Conquer, Head of Education Partnerships Alistair.conquer@nottinghamcity.gov.uk 0115 9476202
Other colleagues who have provided input:	Laura Wilson, Constitutional Services Officer laura.wilson@nottinghamcity.gov.uk 0115 8764301 Kim Pocock, Constitutional Services Manager kim.pocock@nottinghamcity.gov.uk 0115 8764313
Summary	
<p>As detailed in the report to the Schools Forum on 13 February 2014 the membership and constitution need to be refreshed in light of new guidance issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in October 2013 (previously circulated to members), to reflect the change in the proportion of maintained schools and academies and other local changes, to reduce the size of the Schools Forum to facilitate more effective decision making and to provide clarity to decision making processes.</p> <p>The EFA also published an update to the Schools Forum Regulations 2012 on 25 February 2014 (departmental advice attached as Appendix 1) to incorporate the amendments to the Regulations that were contained in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2012 and 2013, specifically relating to how Schools Forum takes decisions on de-delegation, the requirement to elect a member of providers of 16-19 education to Schools Forum and the removal of the requirement to have a member from the 14-19 partnership, which are all reflected in the revised constitution and refreshed membership.</p> <p>This report presents the final version of the constitution and refreshed membership for implementation from September 2014.</p>	
Recommendation(s):	
1	To approve the changes to the membership of the Schools Forum from September 2014 as detailed on page 4 of the constitution.
2	To approve the revised constitution, noting the revised election procedures for members, for implementation from September 2014 as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report.
3	To approve the revised meeting cycle of 6 meetings per academic year from September 2014.

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Education Funding Agency (EFA) issued new guidance to local authorities and members of Schools Forums in October 2013. This provides clear guidance on membership and decision making to be incorporated in Schools Forum constitutions.
- 1.2 In order to improve efficient and effective discussion and decision making the membership of the Schools Forum will reduce from 33 to 18 members.

- 1.3 As advised by the EFA guidance, the new schools membership is broadly proportionate to pupil numbers in different categories.
- 1.4 To reflect the change in the number of members and that it is no longer possible to manage elections using Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs) it is necessary to establish new election procedures.
- 1.5 To ensure clarity on decision making, the section on voting in the constitution has been strengthened.
- 1.6 The new meeting cycle is more appropriate to the level of business to be dealt with by the Schools Forum.

2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 Consultation on the revised membership and constitution ran from 5 to 28 February 2014 and discussion on the proposals took place at the Forum meeting on 13 February 2014. Responses to comments on the proposals are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 2.2 The revised constitution can be found at Appendix 3 to this report. Changes have been made to include the following:
 - a) the changed membership as outlined on page 4 of the constitution;
 - b) an annual refresh of the constitution, including consideration of membership, (in line with the EFA guidance);
 - c) revised election procedures (now presented as an appendix to the constitution) to reflect the discontinuation of Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs) and in line with the EFA guidance;
 - d) strengthened voting arrangements to reflect clarification in the EFA guidance (including a table indicating which members can vote on each decision presented as an appendix to the constitution).

In line with the Council's Accessible Information Policy it the constitution has been refreshed in plain English.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 No other options were considered at this stage. Other options were considered prior to the consultation on the revised membership and constitution and were detailed in the 13 February 2014 report.

4. OUTCOMES/DELIVERABLES

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report aim to contribute to efficient, effective and lawful decision making by the Schools Forum.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications or value for money issues arising from this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS)

6.1 The risk of having a constitution which is not in line with the EFA guidance and which is not clear on decision making is to expose the Forum to unlawful decision making.

7. OBSERVATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FAMILY COMMUNITY TEAMS

7.1 None.

8. HR ISSUES

8.1 None.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 An equality impact assessment is not needed as the report does not relate to new or changing policies or functions.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

10.1 None.

11. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

11.1 Schools Forums: operational and good practice guide for local authorities and members of Schools Forums, October 2013, Education Funding Agency
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2013>

11.2 Schools Forum report and minutes dated 13 February 2014 - Revised Membership and Constitution for Nottingham City Schools Forum
<http://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=259&MId=3668>

11.3 Revised Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 published in February 2014
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-england-regulations-2012>