

# Membership arrangements for the Schools Forum

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**Swindon Schools Forum**

**Date: 24 September 2012**

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Wards: All  
Locality Affected: All  
Parishes Affected: All

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## **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 The regulations affecting Schools Forums in England have changed. A new statutory instrument was laid before Parliament on 7 September 2012, revoking the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2010. The instrument defines new regulations relating to the constitution of Schools Forums, their membership, matters on which the local authority must consult the Schools Forum in their area and the charging of Schools Forum's expenses.
- 1.2 This report sets out the necessary changes required to be implemented from 1 October 2012 and focuses on the immediate priority of agreeing membership.

## **2. Recommendation**

Schools Forum is recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree to the constitution of the Schools Forum as outlined in paragraph 3.12 in respect of:
  - School members
  - Academies members
  - Non-school members

## **3. Detail**

### Membership

- 3.1 The Forum must comprise:
  - a) Schools members
  - b) Academies members
  - c) Non-school members
- 3.2 Primary and Secondary Schools and Academies should have broadly proportionate representation according to pupil numbers in each category, subject to the requirements described in paragraphs 3.7 to 3.9 .
- 3.3 There is no longer a requirement to have a minimum of 15 people on Schools Forum.
- 3.4 Schools members and Academies members must together comprise at least two-thirds of the membership of the Forum.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paddy Bradley, Direct Dial 01793 465744, [pbradley@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:pbradley@swindon.gov.uk).

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- 3.5 Primary schools, secondary schools and Academies must be broadly proportionately represented on the Forum.
- 3.6 At least one member must be a representative of the governing bodies of maintained schools and at least one member must be a representative of the head teachers of such schools.
- 3.7 At least one schools member must be a representative of a secondary school in those areas where the LA maintains one or more secondary schools.
- 3.8 Where the LA maintains one or more special schools, at least one schools member must be a representative of a special school.
- 3.9 At least one schools member must be a representative of a pupil referral unit if the LA maintains such an organisation.
- 3.10 The Education Funding agency (EFA) has been granted observer status at Schools Forum meetings.
- 3.11 The current membership of Schools Forum is included below to indicate the change in required membership from 1 October 2012.

| <b>Schools' Members</b><br><b>(agreed at Schools Forum on</b><br><b>11.10.11)</b><br><b>This membership is currently valid.</b> |  | <b>Schools' Members</b><br><b>actually appointed</b><br><b>(as at Schools</b><br><b>Forum on 06.03.12)</b>   | <b>Non-schools' Members</b>  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Secondary   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Academy Head Teachers</li> <li>• 1 Maintained school Head Teacher</li> <li>• 2 Academy Governors</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Academy Head Teachers</li> <li>• 2 Maintained school Head Teachers</li> <li>• 1 Academy Governor + 1 vacancy</li> </ul> | One representative of each of the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diocesan Authorities</li> <li>• Trade Unions</li> <li>• Early Years</li> <li>• 14-19 Partnership</li> <li>• Ethnic Minority Community</li> <li>• Youth</li> </ul><br><i>(06.03.12<br/>As above but no Youth</i> |
| Primary   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Maintained school Head Teachers</li> <li>• 3 Maintained school Governors</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Maintained school Head Teachers</li> <li>• 2 Maintained school Governors</li> <li>• 1 Academy</li> </ul>                |  |

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|---|--|--|------------------------|
|   |  | Governor   | <i>representative)</i> |
| Special   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Maintained school Head Teacher</li> <li>1 Maintained school Governor</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Maintained school Head Teacher</li> <li>1 Maintained school Governor</li> </ul> |                        |
| Academy   | 1 representative of Swindon Academy (also covering Primary Academy schools – as agreed at Schools Forum October 2011)    | 1 representative of Swindon Academy  |                        |
| TOTALS  | 17   | 16   | 6                      |

3.12 The proposed new membership structure is set out below.

| Schools' Members    |   | Non-schools' Members   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Primary             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Head Teachers</li> <li>1 Governor</li> </ul> | One representative of each of the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bristol CE Diocese</li> <li>Clifton Catholic Diocese</li> <li>Trade Unions</li> <li>Early Years (Private, Voluntary and Independent)</li> <li>14-19 Partnership</li> <li>Ethnic Minority</li> </ul> |
| Secondary           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Head Teacher</li> </ul>                      |  |
| Special             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Head Teacher</li> <li>1 Governor</li> </ul>  |  |
| Pupil Referral Unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Head Teacher</li> </ul>                      |  |

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|  |  |             |
|--|--|-------------|
| Academies  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 6 Head Teachers</li><li>• 1 Governor</li></ul> | Communities |
| TOTALS   | 16   | 6           |
| In addition there will be one representative from the Education Funding Agency with observer status. |  |             |

## 3.13 The changes involve:

- an overall reduction in the number of members of Schools Forum from 23 to 22 in order to more easily facilitate the requirements described in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.4;
- removal of specific representation for Youth as the focus of membership of the newly constituted schools forums is on those people who manage or work in educational establishments;
- a reduction in the number of governor members from 6 (5 actually appointed) to 3 to help accommodate the general reduction in size of the Schools Forum;
- an increase in representation of Diocesan representatives from 1 to 2;
- the establishment of a specific group, “Academies”, which is made distinct from “Schools”, ie, LA maintained schools to reflect the fact that Academies operate independently of the LA; and
- academy members to be elected to the Schools Forum by the proprietors of the Academies in Swindon.

## 3.14 In discussing the proposed membership structure, Schools Forum is asked to consider whether there needs to be a greater representation from governing bodies, bearing in mind governors’ statutory duties in respect of managing the resources available to schools and academies. If the view of Schools Forum is to increase the number of governor representatives, then further consideration should be given to whether this would be facilitated by a reduction in headteacher representation in a particular category or an overall increase in the size of Schools Forum. In addition, Schools Forum is asked to consider the non-school membership and whether members wish to include specific membership from Youth (although no appointment was made previously).

### Proceedings of the Schools Forum

## 3.15 There is a restriction on LA members and officers who are not members of the Schools Forum taking part in its meetings. Participation is limited to a Lead

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Member for education, children's services or resources; Director of Children's Services (or their representative); Chief Finance Officer (or their representative) or officers who are providing specific financial or technical advice to Schools Forum. Other officers will be able to participate where they are presenting a report, but their participation must be limited to their specific agenda item.

- 3.16 With regards to voting, the key change concerns the funding formulae. Only schools members (mainstream schools, special schools, PRU and academies) and representatives of the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector will be able to vote on the funding formulae.
- 3.17 The Schools Forum must meet at least four times a year and all meetings will be held in public.
- 3.18 The meetings are quorate if at least two fifths of the total membership is present at the meeting.
- 3.19 The members of the Forum must elect a person as chair from among their number and determine the chair's term of office.
- 3.20 Expenses involved in running the Schools Forum, including reasonable expenses incurred by members in attending the Forum must be charged to the schools budget, which in the case of Swindon is the Dedicated Schools Grant.

## **Alternative Options**

- 4.1 There is no alternative to adopting a new membership structure as it is required by the statutory instrument laid before Parliament on the 7 September 2012. Alternative combinations of membership are included for discussion in paragraph 3.14 in addition to the recommended model in paragraph 3.12.

## **5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The Schools Forum is consulted by Swindon Borough Council on the use each year of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), allocated by the Department for Education. In 2012-13, the DSG stands at approximately £140m. The budget for Schools Forum expenses is £2,000 in 2012-13.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights implications have been taken into account in the drafting of this report

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## All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There are no further implications of this report.

## Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The provision of high quality education resulting in high standards of attainment are key features of the One Swindon priority, “We can all benefit from a growing economy and a better town centre” and within the Corporate Strategy to “Create the conditions for good economic growth”.

## Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 Diversity Impact Assessments have been completed for Children’s Services policies and plans and the one Swindon priorities to which this paper relates.

## Risk Management

- 5.6 The Schools Forum has always operated at close to full membership and so there is little risk involved in seeking membership across the various categories. Due to the late availability of the Government regulations, there is a risk that not all categories of membership may be filled in time to meet the implementation date of 1 October 2012. The regulations allow for flexibility in determining the date by which members must be elected by their constituent groups.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 None