



Schools Forum Date: 23 October 2014 Time: 8:30 a.m. Venue: Shrewsbury Training and Development Centre	<u>Item</u> Public	<u>Paper</u> B
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SHROPSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION

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Summary

At their meeting on 7 November 2013, Schools Forum approved the constitutional arrangements for the annual re-apportionment of membership to take account of the changing mix between maintained and academy schools. This report details the required re-apportionment from April 2015 based on the academy conversions up to October 2014.

The report also proposes changes to the Constitution to allow for the appointment of an independent chair of Schools Forum.

Recommendation

- To approve the re-apportionment of Schools Forum membership from April 2015, including the transfer of the current special school representative to take up a academy membership vacancy.
- To approve changes to the Constitution to allow for the appointment of an independent chair of Schools Forum.

REPORT

Membership

1. All local authority School Forums are constituted in accordance with the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012. Shropshire Schools Forum approved the current Constitution at their meeting on 13 September 2012, with the new Constitution becoming operational from 1 October 2012.
2. At their meeting on 7 November 2013 Schools Forum received a report on a document from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) which referenced a

requirement for regular reviews of Forum membership to take account of the pace of academy conversions and to ensure that membership remains proportionate (based on pupil numbers).

3. At present there are 21 school places on Forum, broken down as follows: 10 primary (5 headteachers, 5 governors), 7 secondary (3 headteachers, 4 governors), 2 academy (headteachers), 1 special school place and 1 pupil referral unit (PRU). The special school and PRU places are not included in the apportionment calculation. The membership as at 1 October 2014 is attached.
4. In the November 2013 report Schools Forum agreed that a re-apportionment of membership should take place annually, from 1 April, using the pupil numbers from the previous October's school census. The report highlighted the need, from April 2014, to reduce the secondary membership from 7 to 5 and to increase the academy representation from 2 to 4. It should be noted that these membership changes have not yet been fully actioned.
5. In order to model the likely position from April 2015, the school census information from January 2014 and the number of academies on 1 October 2014, has been used to assess the impact on representation – see table below (noting that 19 school places are apportioned by excluding special and PRU members).

	Jan. 2014 NOR	Apportionment	
Maintained Primary Schools	19,176	52.6%	10
Maintained Secondary Schools	7,021	19.3%	4
Academies (as at 1 October 2013)	10,243	28.1%	5
	36,440	100.0%	19

6. The analysis indicates – noting that the October 2014 school census data needs to be applied to the model but is unlikely to result in any material change – that from April 2015 there will need to be a reduction from 7 to 4 maintained secondary representatives, and an increase from 2 to 5 academy representatives. It should be noted that the academy pupil numbers include 10.5% in the primary phase. It will be for the academy schools to consider whether one of the 5 places should allocated to a primary phase academy.
7. It should be noted that the funding formula from 2015-16 will be used to determine the budget for free schools. The EFA guidelines stipulate that the academy representation can be drawn from free schools in the local authority area. Equally consideration will need to be given to the balance of headteacher and governor representation in each of the constituent groups.
8. Severndale Specialist School converted to an academy on 1 January 2014. They currently provide the special school representative on Forum. There is currently a vacancy for one of the 2 academy representatives. It is recommended that the current special school representative takes up the vacant academy position and that a new special school representative be drawn from the Council's remaining maintained special school (noting that special school pupil numbers are not used in the apportionment calculation).

9. The reduction from 7 to 4 members from secondary maintained schools will need managing. The terms of office for 2 of the current members (both governors) cease before 1 April 2015.
10. While the local authority will support the constituent groups through the facilitation and management of, for example, election processes, the responsibility for determining how nominations will be sought, the mix between headteachers and governors, and the balance of representation between phases and/or size of school, must rest with the constituent groups.

Election of Chair

11. Schools Forums were required from April 2014 to include a representative from an institution (other than from a school or academy) providing education to 16-19 year olds (but may also be providing education for 14-16 year olds and/or for 20-24 year olds with high needs). This was to replace the requirement for a representative from the 14-19 partnership. It should be noted that this is a non-schools member of Forum which would restrict their voting rights on key funding issues.
12. The Chair of Schools Forum is the current representative from the 14-19 partnership. He was appointed at the September 2013 meeting to serve as Chair until the end of the 2013-14 academic year, in the knowledge that from April 2014 there was no constituted membership for the 14-19 partnership.
13. At their meeting on 18 September 2014 Schools Forum unanimously approved the appointment of the existing Chair for another academic year and that the necessary changes be made to the Constitution to allow for the election of an independent chair who may not be part of the existing membership of the Schools Forum. Schools Forum are therefore asked to formally approve the necessary amendment to the current Constitution.