



Haringey Council

The Children and Young People's Service

Report to Haringey Schools Forum – 8 July 2015

Agenda Item

7

Report Status

For information/note
For consultation & views
For decision

Report Title: Schools Forum Membership

Authors: Carolyn Banks, Clerk to the Forum

Telephone: 020 8489 5030

Email: Carolyn.banks@haringey.gov.uk

Purpose: To review the membership of the Forum.

Recommendations:

1. That the Forum consider size and membership and determine as follows:-
 - a) That the Schools members be either reduced by three, (two less from the primary sector and one from the secondary sector) and a reduction of one from the Academy members to be reduced as outlined in the report.

or

 - b) that the current status quo of Schools and Academy members continue for a further three years or sooner if legislation requires.
2. That the Forum consider whether to reduce the number of non school members by one through the reduction of places allocated to trade unions by one place.
3. That the overall membership continue to be reviewed on a tri-annual basis with annual review to ensure that there is a balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies members proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category.

4. That the Clerk commence the re-election process with a view to the new membership being in place for September 2012 and write to the nominating organisations inviting nominations for appointment to the Forum.

1. Background.

- 1.1 The current three year period of office for Forum Members comes to an end in September 2015.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Constitution, a re- election process should commence following this meeting and the newly elected Forum will take office from the date of the next meeting.

2. Structure of the Forum

- 2.1 The Education Funding Agency in March 2015 published an operational and good practice guide for Schools Forum. This guidance confirms that Schools forums must have 'schools members', 'academies member(s)' if there is at least one academy in the local authority's area and 'non-schools members'.
- 2.2 Schools and academies members together must number at least two-thirds of the total membership of the schools forum and the balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies members must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category. Consequently, whilst the Forum agrees its membership for a three year period annual reviews are undertaken.

3. School Members

- 3.1 Schools members represent specified phases or types of maintained schools within the local authority. As a minimum, schools forums must contain representatives of two groups of schools: primary and secondary schools, In addition there must be at least one representative from special schools, nursery and pupil referral units (PRUs).
- 3.2 The local authority then has discretion to divide the groups referred to in into one or more of the following sub-groups:
 - headteachers or headteachers' representatives in each group;
 - governors in each group;
 - representatives of a particular school category, e.g. voluntary aided.
- 3.3 Headteachers can be represented by other senior members of staff within their school. Governors can include interim executive members of an interim executive board. The sub-groups do not have to be of equal size – for example, there may be more representatives of headteachers of primary schools than governors of such schools, or vice versa. The membership structure of the schools forum should

ensure there is sufficient representation of each type of schools member in each group to ensure that debate within the schools forum is balanced and representative. As a minimum, there must be at least one representative of headteachers and one representative of governors among the schools members.

- 3.4 Whatever the membership structure of schools members on a schools forum, the important issue is that it should reflect most effectively the profile of education provision across the local authority to ensure that there is not an in-built bias towards any one phase or group.

4. Academy Members

- 4.1 Academies members must represent mainstream academies, including the Octagan Academy, Tottenham UTC and the two free schools.
- 4.2 Although there is no requirement for academies members to represent specific primary and secondary phases, to do so ensures representation remains broadly proportionate to pupil numbers.

5. Non School Members

- 5.1 Non-schools members may number no more than a third of a schools forum's total membership. A representative of providers of 16-19 education must be elected from those providers. Nominations for this place will be sought from CONEL, Area 51, HALS and the Harrington Scheme.
- 5.2 In addition the local authority must appoint at least one person to represent early years providers from the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector.
- 5.3 Before appointing additional non-schools members to the schools forum, the local authority must consider whether the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses situated in the local authority's area; and, where there are schools or academies in the area with a different religious character, the appropriate faith group, should be represented on the schools forum.
- 5.4 The purpose of non-schools members is also to bring greater breadth of discussion to schools forum meetings and ensure that stakeholders and partners other than schools are represented. Organisations which typically provide non-schools members are trades unions, professional associations and representatives of youth groups. Parent groups could also be considered. However, as there are clearly limited numbers of non-schools members able to be on a schools forum, care should be taken to ensure that an appropriate representation from wider stakeholders is achieved.

6. Size of the Forum

- 6.1 Although there is no maximum or minimum size required authorities are recommended to take various issues into account in deciding the actual size, including the need to have full representation for various types of school, and the local authority's policy on representation of non-schools members. Care is also recommended to be taken to keep the schools forum to a reasonable size to ensure that it does not become too unwieldy. Currently the Forum consists of 35 members as set out below made up of 29 school members, and 6 non schools members. This is on the large size when compared with other boroughs which are around 16 to 22. Our current membership is made up as follows:-

No.	Membership Category
	<u>Schools</u>
1	Children's Centre Staff
1	Children's Centre Governor
7	Primary Maintained sector School Staff
7	Primary Maintained sector School Governor
2	Secondary maintained sector School Staff
3	Secondary maintained School Governor
1	Special School Staff
1	Special School Governor
1	Pupil Referral Unit
24	Total
	<u>Academies</u>
1	Primary Academy sector school staff
1	Primary Academy sector school governor
2	Secondary Academy Sector school staff
1	Secondary Academy Sector governors
5	Total
	<u>Non Schools</u>
1	Haringey Councillor
1	Children's Service Consultative Committee (Trades Union)
1	Teachers' Professional Associations
1	Faith Sector
1	14-19 Partnership
1	Early Years Provider.
6	Sub-Total Non School Members
35	Total Members
	<u>Observers</u>
	Haringey Council Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
	Education Funding Agency

6.2 A summary of the structure of Forum is provided by the EFA (Appendix A). Although it has not been introduced the DfE have indicated that they may consider making further changes that will support fairness and transparency in the operation of Schools Forum, and this could include setting a maximum cap on the number of members. Appendix B provides a breakdown of pupil placements on a school by school basis which supports a proposed slight reduction in membership whilst still maintaining appropriate ratios and balance. The Forum is asked to consider the current numbers and whether a slight reduction would be desired. If so it would be proposed that the number of school members be reduced by 3, with two fewer places available from the primary sector, one staff and one governor and a reduction of one from the secondary sector from a governor. In order to ensure numbers are proportionate there would also be a reduction of one from the Academy members. Furthermore it is also suggested that consideration be given to a reduction in the number of non school members by one. This would give a total membership of 30 as follows:-

No.	Membership Category
	<u>Schools</u>
1	Nursery Schools Staff
1	Nursery School Governor
6	Primary Maintained sector School Staff
6	Primary Maintained sector School Governor
2	Secondary maintained sector School Staff
2	Secondary maintained School Governor
1	Pupil Referral Unit
1	Special School Staff
1	Special School Governor
21	Total
	<u>Academies</u>
1	Primary Academy sector school staff
1	Primary Academy sector school governor
1	Secondary Academy Sector school staff
1	Secondary Academy Sector governors
4	Total
	<u>Non Schools</u>
1	Haringey Councillor
1	Trade Unions
1	Faith Sector
1	16 – 19 providers
1	Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent providers.(PVI)
5	Sub-Total Non School Members

30	Total Members
	Observers
	Haringey Council Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
	Education Funding Agency

7. Term of office

The guidance states that the term of office for each schools member and academies member should be stipulated by the local authority at the time of appointment. Such stipulation should follow published rules and be applied in a consistent manner between members. They need not have identical terms – there may be a case for varied terms so that there is continuity of experience rather than there being a complete change in the membership at a single point. Although it may appear as good practice to vary the terms of office so that there is no a complete change of membership due to the fact that many of the representatives are returned for a further period of office this is not an issue in Haringey. In addition the Forum has previously agreed that there should be an annual review. It is therefore recommended that the current practice of a total review on a tri -annual basis should continue.

8. Election process

- 8.1 For school members and in accordance with the guidance it is thought that the relevant group or sub-group is probably best placed to determine how their schools members should be elected. Similarly Academies members must be elected by the proprietor bodies.

9. Other Membership issues

- 9.1 There are three restrictions placed on who can be a non-schools member of a schools forum. The local authority cannot appoint:
- an elected member of the local authority who is appointed to the executive of that local authority (a lead member/portfolio holder) 'executive members',
 - the Director of Children's Services or any officer employed or engaged to work under the management of the Director of Children's Services, and who does not directly provide education to children (or manage those who do)
 - other officers with a specific role in management of and/or who advise on funding for schools

10 The role of executive elected members

- 10.1 The guidance advises that a schools forum needs to ensure that there are systems in place for executive members of the Council to be aware of its views on specific issues and, in particular, any decisions it takes in relation to the Schools Budget and individual budget shares.
- 10.2 Executive members with responsibility for education/children's services or resources of the local authority are able to participate in schools forum meetings. By doing so such elected members are able to contribute to the discussion and receive first-hand the views of the schools forum: it is clearly good practice for this to be the case and the regulations provide the right for executive members to attend and speak at schools forum meetings.

11. Observers

The Regulations provide that the Secretary of State can appoint an observer to attend and speak at schools forum meetings, e.g. a representative from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). This allows a conduit for national policy to be discussed at a local level and provide access for schools forum to an additional support mechanism, e.g. where there are highly complex issues to resolve.