

## SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA ITEM

For Action

For Information



**Brief Description of Item** (including the purpose / reason for presenting this for consideration by the Forum)

**This report provides an update on the Forum's membership composition.**

**Date (s) of any Previous Discussion at the Forum**

The Forum's Conduct of Meetings document and membership arrangements are subject to annual review. Members agreed arrangements for the 2017/ 2018 academic year at the meeting held on 5 July 2017.

**Background / Context**

Accompanying the changes in the national funding system, the Government revised the Schools Forum Regulations. These came into force on 1 October 2012. Although much of the detail on how Forums operate is still left for local decision, the revised Regulations required some significant changes, including publicly accessible meetings, for Forum papers to be published and for decisions to be taken on formula funding and on de-delegated DSG funds on a phase by phase basis. Non schools members are also not permitted to take part in decision making on formula funding.

Within good practice guidance, the DfE has stressed to authorities that it is essential that Forum membership arrangements keep pace with the changing landscape, in particular the conversion of maintained schools to academy status. The Authority must consider annually how best to provide for responsive arrangements, to ensure the Forum remains representative and to avoid any unintended bias towards any one phase, whilst continuing to ensure stability of membership and effective decision making.

A report was presented to the Schools Forum on 21 September 2016, which proposed an 'interim solution' for membership for the 2016/17 academic year during the period in which we saw a large number of schools converting to academy status in Bradford. The Schools Forum, in July 2017, then agreed the Authority's proposal for the re-alignment of Forum membership between sectors. The membership composition of the Schools Forum has not been formally reviewed since.

There is still some fluidity in the numbers of maintained schools and academies in the District and continued progression in the conversion of maintained schools. We currently forecast that up to 20 schools may convert during 2018.

**Details of the Item for Consideration**

Appendix 1 summarises the current membership of the Schools Forum.

The Authority's calculation confirms that our Schools' and Academy members' composition should not be adjusted further at this time; the split of maintained and academies membership is in line with pupil numbers, where the calculation of pupil numbers incorporates a forecast of academy conversions to take place during 2018.

Therefore, of the 27 Schools and Academy members, 14 should continue to be from maintained schools and 13 from academies. Please note that, of the 2 academy memberships that are currently vacant, 1 of these is specifically set aside, as agreed, to be taken by a representative of alternative provision academies. We anticipate that we will have an alternative provision academy established during 2018 and the Regulations require that specific membership is given to this sector.

Please note that the Authority does not propose at this stage to alter the composition of non-schools members. It is anticipated that review will take place as and when direction comes from the DfE on Schools Forum composition, which is expected in the light of national funding formula and the changing role of Schools Forums.

The DfE has not yet announced any directed changes in the operation / composition of Schools Forums for 2019/20.

**How does this item support the achievement of the District's Education Priorities**

The Schools Forum has a key part to play in the way that resources for education, through the DSG, are allocated. It is essential that the Forum is representative of all settings that will be affected its recommendations and decisions.

**Implications for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) (if any)**

No direct implications

**Recommendations**

**The Schools Forum is asked to consider and to note the information provided.**

**List of Supporting Appendices / Papers (where applicable)**

Appendix 1 – Schools Forum Membership June 2018

**Contact Officer (name, telephone number and email address)**

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