

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 School 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 2019/ 2020 academic year at the meeting held on 10 July 2019.

Background / Context

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.

Details of the Item for Consideration

Appendix 1 summarises the current membership of the Schools Forum.

The Authority's calculation indicates that we are 'on the cusp' of needing to transfer 1 or 2 maintained school membership positions to the academy sector, depending on the number of conversions that take place during 2020/21, in order for our composition to remain in line with pupil numbers. This would possibly be the transfer of 1 primary and 1 secondary membership. However, as this is dependent on the pattern of conversion to come this year, which is uncertain, we think it sensible to hold off making this transfer now and we recommend that we wait until the position is confirmed this time next year. Members will note that there are currently vacancies in the maintained school memberships, which could be used to enact this transfer. Members will also note that there are currently 3 academy memberships vacant, which should be filled before further increasing the number of academy membership posts. Therefore, of the 27 Schools and Academy members, 14 are recommended to continue from maintained schools and 13 from academies for 2020/21.

The Authority does not propose to alter the composition of non-schools members at this time. It is anticipated that review may take place as and when direction comes from the DfE on Schools Forum composition, which is anticipated 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 2021/22.

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 July 2020
Appendix 2 – Conduct of Meeting & Procedural Matters (reminder)

Contact Officer (name, telephone number and email address)

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