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**Meeting:** Schools Forum

**Date:** 8 March 2010

**Subject:** Membership of the Schools Forum

**Report of:** Director of Children Families and Learning

**Summary:** The report indicates that the membership of the Forum is now in line with the Terms of Reference and also seeks the Forum's views on the membership provisions of the Terms of Reference.

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Contact Officer: Mel Peaston, Interim Committee Services Manager

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

The report seeks to ensure that the Schools Forum membership requirements are fit for purpose in that they enable the Forum to be a robust decision making body in relation to its terms of reference.

### **Financial:**

There are no financial implications arising from the report.

### **Legal:**

The Schools Forum's terms of reference must comply with section 47A of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 amended by the Education Act 2005, the Schools Forums (England) Regulations and the Schools Forum (England) (as amended) Regulations 2005.

The Schools Forum is an advisory and decision making body on matters relating to the schools budget as defined in section 41 of the Education Act 2002 and section 16 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Risk Management:**

There are no risk management implications arising from the report.

### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

There are no staffing or trades union implications arising from the report.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

There are no equalities or human rights implications arising from the report.

**Community Safety:**

There are no community safety implications arising from the report.

**Sustainability:**

There are no sustainability implications arising from the report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:****1. that the Schools Forum:-**

- (a) notes that the membership of the Forum is now in accordance with the provisions of its terms of reference regarding Upper Schools phase representation;**
- (b) comments on the membership provisions of the terms of reference with a view to making them more fit for purpose;**
- (c) comments on any other aspects of the terms of reference which are considered to be in need of review.**

**Current Membership of the Schools Forum**

1. At the last meeting of the Schools Forum on 25 January 2010 it was noted that membership of the Forum did not comply with the requirements of the terms of reference. There were two School Governors representing upper schools instead of one, and one Headteacher representing upper schools instead of two. (The current terms of reference are attached at **Appendix A**).
2. Since then appropriate action has been taken such that the membership is now in line with the provisions of the terms of reference. Representation in respect of Upper Schools is now as follows:-
  - 2 Upper School Headteachers
  - 1 Upper School Governor .

**Review of the Membership Requirements of the Terms of Reference**

3. At the last meeting of the Forum it was suggested that the membership requirements set out in the terms of reference should be reviewed as there did not seem to be parity of representation across the various tiers and settings and the reasons for this were not apparent.
4. Paragraph 20 of the terms of reference provides that the Constitution and Terms of Reference of the Forum shall be reviewed annually.

5. It therefore seems appropriate that the Forum should carry out a review of its terms of reference with particular regard to its membership requirements, so that any changes can be implemented for the year 2010/11 ahead.

### **Terms of Reference – legal status**

6. The Schools Forum is an entity required by statute. (Details of the specific legislation are included in the legal implications paragraph of the Corporate Implications section at the beginning of this report.) The legislation provides that the purpose of a schools forum is to advise the relevant authority on such matters relating to the authority's schools budget. It also states that the schools forum will represent the governing bodies and head teachers of schools maintained by the authority and, if the authority so determine, also represent such bodies as the authority may from time to time in accordance with regulations determine.
7. There is no statutory guidance on the number of Headteachers or Governors there may be on a schools forum, nor on the numbers required for a quorum.
8. The provisions for representations on the Schools Forums for Milton Keynes, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Leicester City and Northumberland (a 3-tier education authority) are set out at **Appendix B**, together with the membership provisions for the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum.
9. The Forum is asked to consider whether the current membership requirements are appropriate. If they are considered not appropriate, the Forum is asked to indicate whether there is further information required to enable a review of the membership requirements of the Terms of Reference. If no further information is required the Forum may determine at the meeting what it wishes the membership requirements to be.

### **Terms of Reference**

10. The Schools Forum may wish to review other aspects of the Terms of Reference and is invited to comment.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

13. The membership of the Schools Forum is in accordance with the provisions of the terms of reference. However the Forum may wish to amend the membership provisions and is invited to comment both on that part of the terms of reference and on any other part which is considered to be in need of review.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Terms of Reference of the Central Bedfordshire Schools Forum  
Appendix B – details of the membership provision of other Schools Forums

**Background Papers:** None