

Central Bedfordshire Council

General Purposes Committee

30 October 2018

Election of Parent Governor Co-opted representatives for the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Purpose of this report

This report proposes an amendment to the Constitution to allow the appointment of parent governor representatives from academies in Central Bedfordshire to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee from May 2019 onwards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to approve the proposed amendments to Part 3C of the Constitution.

Background

1. The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001 require all Councils to elect between two and five parent governor representatives of schools maintained by the authority to sit on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
2. In Central Bedfordshire the relevant committee is the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which at present has three parent governor representatives who are elected to serve a four-year term of office. The current term of office ends in May 2019.
3. In order to qualify to be a co-opted Member a person must satisfy the following criteria at the point that they are elected: -
 - a. a parent governor at a maintained school which is maintained by the local education authority;
 - b. the parent of a registered pupil who is educated at a maintained school which is maintained by the local education authority, or who is educated by the authority otherwise than at a school;
4. Should a school become an academy during the four-year term of office of a representative that does mean they are disqualified from office immediately but it does mean they could not seek re-election at the start of a new four-year cycle under the current arrangements.

5. Whilst the regulations relate solely to maintained schools they were enacted at a time before the number of academies in England and Wales was on the increase. The number of academies in Central Bedfordshire has now risen to the level where academies make up approximately 40% of the total schools in Central Bedfordshire.

Options for consideration

6. Due to the increasing number of academies in Central Bedfordshire it is proposed that the Constitution be amended to permit the appointment of one additional parent governor representative from the academy schools in Central Bedfordshire. This representative would have equal voting rights with the other co-opted representatives, ie. they would be able to vote on education matters, but not on other matters, although they may stay in the meeting and speak on any matter.
7. So as not to impact on the proportionality of the Committee or to further increase the total number of Members and co-opted Members it is proposed that the number of co-opted representatives of maintained schools be reduced to two.
8. The quorum of the Committee will be unaffected, it will remain as four Councillors and two co-opted representatives (either parent governors or diocesan representatives) whenever considering education matters and three Councillors at all other times.

Reason for decision

9. Due to the increase in the number of academies in Central Bedfordshire these proposals are aimed at enhancing the representation of the spectrum of schools in Central Bedfordshire.

Council Priorities

10. These proposals are aimed at the Council priorities of improving education and skills and supporting a more efficient and responsive Council.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

11. Legal comments are included in the report.

Financial and Risk Implications

12. There are no financial implications as a result of these proposals. Parent Governor representatives are paid an allowance as set out in the Members Allowances Scheme. Should Members decide to increase the total of number of parent governor co-opted representatives this will incur an additional cost of up to approximately £1,200 per co-optee.

Equalities Implications

13. These proposals will enhance the representation of academies in Central Bedfordshire. As such it is suggested that this decision will contribute positively to enhancing the engagement from a wider spectrum of the education sector in the area.

Conclusion and next Steps

14. Subject to the approval of General Purposes these proposals would require the agreement of Council. If agreed they would be enacted from May 2019 following the election of representatives to the Committee.

Appendices

Appendix A: Revised Part 3C of the Constitution

Background Papers

None

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