

**23 September 2010**

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## **Role of Schools Forum**

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To brief members of the Committee on the role of the Schools Forum.

### **Background**

2. The requirements for the Schools Forum were initially set out in regulations (Statutory Instrument No 2114/2002). These regulations have been revoked and replaced by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2010 (Statutory Instrument No 344/2010) Any change in constitution would require the approval of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
3. The regulations are made under Section 47A and 138(7) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and required that a School Forum be established on April 1 2003.

### **Main Considerations for the Council**

4. The terms of reference for the Wiltshire Schools Forum are attached at Appendix 1. The constitution and terms of reference have recently been amended to reflect the changes introduced by the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2010. The amendments were agreed by Schools Forum at the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010 and recommended to the portfolio holder for Children's Services for delegated decision. This decision is currently published as an intention to make a decision, and liable to representations. This period will end on 6th September and the decision formally signed.
5. The changes largely affect the membership of the Forum ensuring that academies within the local authority area are represented on the Schools Forum.
6. The Schools Forum has 3 main functions in relation to the schools budget:
  - Consultation on the schools funding formula – the Local Authority (LA) must consult the Schools Forum on any changes to the schools funding formula within Wiltshire and the financial impact of those changes. All schools in Wiltshire are funded through a locally determined formula;
  - Consultation on contracts – the LA must consult the Schools Forum on any changes to contracts which are to be paid from the schools budget;

- Consultation on financial issues – the LA needs to consult the Schools Forum annually in relation to the local authority functions funded from the schools budget.
7. Membership of the Schools Forum is prescribed in regulations and the Wiltshire Schools Forum membership is detailed in Appendix 1. The majority of members are to be “schools” members, in Wiltshire these are Head Teachers and Governors. Academies must also be represented. The proportion of schools to non-schools members is determined in the regulations and it is a requirement to have non-schools members on the Schools Forum. These include representatives from the Diocese, Early Years Partnership and 13 to 19 Partnership. 3 elected parent governor representatives on the Councils Children’s Select Committee are also invited as observers ex officio.
  8. The Wiltshire Schools Forum meets 5 times per year in January, March, June, September/October and December. Business is also conducted through a number of working groups. Currently the working groups are:
    - School Funding Working Group
    - SEN & Social Deprivation Group
    - Early Years Reference Group
    - School Services Group
  9. A draft of the Schools Forum work plan through 2010 is attached as Appendix 2. The work plan is still being developed but gives a guide to the work to be undertaken in any year.

### **Environmental Impact of the Proposal**

10. No environmental impact from this report.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

11. Schools Forums should be representative of the schools and other bodies affected by decisions on Schools Budget funding

### **Risk Assessment**

12. This report is a briefing note on the role of Schools Forum – no specific risks associated with the report.

### **Financial Implications**

13. None arising from the report.

### **Legal Implications**

14. Outlined within the report.

## **Proposal**

15. Members are asked to note the report.

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### **Background Papers**

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Wiltshire Schools Forum Terms of Reference  
Appendix 2 – Wiltshire Schools Forum 2010 work plan