

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

Agenda Item No: 6 (h)

26 July 2018

Report of the Strategic Director for Children’s Services

Mainstream Schools’ Membership of the Schools Forum – (Young People)

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to revise the membership and members’ periods of office of the School Forum.

2. Information and Analysis

The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) which govern the operation of the Schools Forum require that the Forum’s membership is reviewed periodically to ensure that the allocation of mainstream school places between maintained schools and academies remains broadly representative of the position within each local authority. The current membership of the Schools Forum is shown in the table below.

Table 1 – Current Schools Forum Membership

	Head	Governors	Other	Total
Primary	6	5		11
Secondary	2	2		4
Academy*	*	*	*7	7
Sub Total – Mainstream places	8	7	7	22
Nursery	1	1		2
Special	1	1		2
Support centres			1	1
Sub Total – School places	10	9	8	27
Diocesan			2	2
Unions			4	4
16-19			1	1
Non maintained early years			2	2
Sub Total – Non-school places	-	-	9	9
Total	10	9	*17	36

* Academy representation is across phases

The school places must be at least 2/3rds of the Membership, (Derbyshire has 3/4.) In addition, there are “observer” places on the Forum for LA Elected Members, the Parent Partnership and the Education Funding Agency.

An analysis of the October 2017 school census data, updated to reflect the expected changes in the status of schools, suggests a revised distribution of places should be adopted.

Table 2 – Revised mainstream school/academy pupil populations

Phase	Sector	NOR (pre/post-16)	% of total	Pro rata places	Pro rata places (rounded)
Primary	Maintained	50,348	48.4%	10.65	11.00
Secondary	Maintained	15,055	14.5%	3.18	3.00
Primary/Secondary	Academy	38,665	37.1%	8.17	8.00
TOTAL		104,068	100.00%	22.00	22.00

Comparing the above revised pro rata split of places with the current distribution gives the following outcome.

Table 3 – Proposed revised mainstream school membership

Sector	Current	Revised	Change
LA Maintained Primary - Head	6	6	0
LA Maintained Primary - Governor	5	5	0
LA Maintained Secondary - Head	2	2	0
LA Maintained Secondary - Governor	2	1	-1
Academy	7	8	+1
TOTAL	22	22	0

It is proposed that the above changes to the representation of schools and academies be implemented and the Forum's Constitution amended accordingly.

In addition to the above mainstream changes, four special schools and the Pupil Referral Units have signalled their intentions to become academies. Should these conversions take place, then it is proposed that one of the two special school places be assigned as an academy place. The PRUs would continue to have one place on the Forum.

Looking forward, the advent of increased levels of academisation makes it likely that the number and composition of places on the Forum will need to be reviewed more frequently if the membership is to reflect the wider school/academy community. In order that future changes can be implemented efficiently, it is proposed that decisions on Schools Forum places be delegated to the Strategic Director for Children's Services in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members.

One other matter, the terms of office of School Forum members runs on a 4-year cycle, with the current term's run until 31 August 2019. The national funding framework is largely settled for 2018-19 and 2019-20, with the next major changes likely from April 2020. The advent of the national funding formulae has made it unclear as to what role Schools Forums will play beyond April 2020, or even whether there will be a need for them going forward.

In order to ensure that the knowledge and skills of the current Forum members are retained, it is proposed that their current terms of office be extended to 31 August 2020. Retaining this experience will assist the Authority in implementing any further national changes. Should the DfE determine a continuing role for Schools Forums, then a new Forum would be established in the summer term 2020 to be operational at the start of the 2020/21 academic year.

The changes in this report, which are ultimately a matter for the Council, were discussed with the Forum at its meeting on 18 June 2018 and the Forum agreed with the proposals.

3. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime & disorder, equality of opportunity, human resources, legal & human rights, environmental, financial, social value, health, property and transport considerations.

4. Background Papers

Papers held in Children's Services Finance.

5. Officer's Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to agree that:

- (i) The mainstream Schools Forum places for September 2018 be revised as set out in Table 3;
- (ii) Should one or more special schools become an academy, one of the existing special school places would be designated as an academy place;
- (iii) Should the PRUs become an academy, the existing PRU place would be designated as an academy place;
- (iv) Future changes to the number and composition of places on the Forum be delegated to the Strategic Director in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members;
- (v) The current terms of office be extended to 31 August 2020; and
- (vi) That the Forum's Constitution be amended to reflect (i)-(v) above.

JANE PARFREMENT
Strategic Director for Children's Services