

Norfolk Schools Forum

Constitution and Terms of Reference

1. TITLE

The title of the Committee will be “Norfolk Schools Forum” and will be referred to hereafter as “The Forum”.

2. ROLE/FUNCTION

The Forum’s functions are:

- Formula change (including redistributions) must be consulted and inform governing bodies of all consultations.
- Finance issues – gives a view and informs all governing bodies of all consultations:
 - arrangements for pupils with special educational needs
 - arrangements for use of pupil referral units
 - arrangements for early years provision
 - administration arrangements for the allocation of central government grants
- To give a view on any variations to the operation of the Minimum Funding Guarantee where less than 50% of the Authority’s pupils are affected
- To agree, by phase, the amounts of funding to be retained as central expenditure under the following specific areas:
 - Contingencies
 - Administration of Free School Meals
 - Insurance
 - Licences/subscriptions
 - Staff costs – supply cover
 - Support for minority ethnic
 - Pupils/underachieving groups
 - Behaviour support services
 - Library and museum services
 - School improvement
- General duties for maintained schools – would be decided by the relevant maintained school members.
- Decides on the central spend on the criteria for allocating funding from:
 - Funding for significant pre-16 growth
 - Funding for good or outstanding schools with falling rolls
- Decides for each line central spend on:
 - Early years block provision

- Funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement
 - Back-pay for equal pay claims
 - Remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies
 - Places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils
 - Services previously funded by the retained rate of the ESG
 - Admissions
 - Servicing of Schools Forum
- Decides for each line central spend on:
 - Capital expenditure funded from revenue – agreed prior to April 2013
 - Contribution to combined budgets – agreed by Schools Forum prior to April 2013
 - Existing termination of employment costs – approved prior to April 2013.
 - Prudential borrowing costs - commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013.
 - It is deemed good practice that the authority will inform school forum on central spend on:
 - High needs block provision
 - Central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State.
 - Decides on carry forward deficit on central expenditure to the next year to be funded from the schools budget.
 - Approves Scheme of Financial Management changes (school members only)
 - It is deemed good practice that the Schools Forum are asked to give a view on length of office of members.
 - Determine voting procedure
 - Elects Chair of School Forum.
 - Contracts – gives a view and informs all governing bodies.

3. MEMBERSHIP

(a) The membership of the Forum will be:

School members – 15 members

- 3 Primary Headteachers or governors
- 1 Secondary maintained school representative
- 1 Special School Headteacher
- 1 Nursery School Head teacher or governor
- 1 Special School Academy representative
- 1 AP Academy representative
- 7 Academy representative – this is not restricted to principals, senior staff or governors

Non School members – 6 members

- 1 16-19 representative
- 1 Early Years PVI representative
- 1 C of E Diocesan representative
- 1 Roman Catholic representative
- 1 JCC Primary representative
- 1 JCC Secondary representative

- (b) All school Members will be elected according to the process decided upon by their relevant constituency and all non-school Members will be nominated by their relevant bodies.
- (c) A headteacher representative means a principal, deputy headteacher, bursar or other person responsible for the financial management of the school.
- (d) Give the Education Funding Agency observer status at Schools Forum meetings, with the right to participate in discussions

4. TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP AND CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

- (a) Members should abide by the National Code of Local Government Conduct: if a proposal directly affects an issue in which they might have a pecuniary interest a Member should declare that interest and withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the decision.
- (b) If a Member does not attend for three consecutive meetings, or send a substitute, then the Forum will determine at the third meeting whether that Member should continue to serve on the Forum.
- (c) A member of the Forum will hold office for a maximum of four years after which they must stand for reappointment if they wish to continue. A Member may resign at any time. There is no limit to the number of terms an eligible Member may serve. A new appointment or replacement Member will serve for a four-year term.
- (d) The appointment of any Forum member will end before the expiry of their term of membership if the member concerned ceases to hold the office by virtue of which they became eligible for appointment to the Forum.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The Forum will elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson annually. If necessary, this will be done by a majority of votes cast by individual Members. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson should be from different groups of the Forum, if possible. The Chairperson must not be an elected member or officer of the Local Authority.

6. SECRETARIAT AND PROVISION OF ACCOUNT TO SCHOOLS

The LA will carry out the secretariat function of the Forum and be responsible for ensuring that a record is kept of each meeting. The secretariat will, as soon as reasonably possible, inform the governing bodies of schools maintained by the LA and academies of all consultations carried out in accordance with Part 3 of the Regulations. The LA will also inform all schools of the name of any member elected to the Forum within one month of the appointment.

7. QUORUM/SUBSTITUTES

- (a) To be quorate there must be at least eleven Members in attendance.
- (b) Members may appoint a substitute with full voting rights provided the substitute fulfils the same criteria as the appointed Member.
- (c) The name of the substitute Member will be notified to the Secretary by the appointed Member prior to the start of the meeting.
- (d) Confine the voting arrangements to allow only schools and academy members and providers from the private, voluntary and independent sector to vote on the funding formula

8. PROCEEDINGS

Meetings of the Forum will be held at least four times a year. Wherever possible, the notification convening a meeting, along with the full agenda, will be circulated at least 7 days before the meeting and minutes published promptly on their website

Hold public meetings as is the case with other council committees

Limit the number of other local authority attendees from participating in meetings unless they are a Lead Member with primary responsibility for children's services or education in the authority or for the resources of the authority, a Director of Children's Services (or their representative), the Chief Financial Officer (or their representative) or are providing specific financial or technical advice (including presenting a paper to the Forum)

It is within the rights of the Forum to set up working groups/sub groups to investigate issues requiring investigation

Subject to paragraphs 8 – 10 of the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012 the Forum may determine their own voting procedures.

9. MEMBERS' EXPENSES

(a) All expenses of the Forum will be met by the LA and, in accordance with the Regulations, charged to the Schools Budget.

(b) Expenses for attendance at meetings will be reimbursed in accordance with the scheme approved by the Forum.

10. URGENT DECISIONS OUTSIDE MEETINGS

If an urgent decision is required and there is insufficient time to convene a full Forum meeting, the Chair may decide to implement the following emergency procedure:

All members will be contacted by email (or telephone if they do not have email access) and asked to respond. The decision will stand if the majority of all members responding are in agreement. At least ten members must have responded and every effort should be made to contact each constituent group.