

LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

SCHOOLS FORUM

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Definitions

In these terms of reference the following expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them below:

'The CSA' shall mean the Children's Services Authority of the London Borough of Enfield.

The 'Regulations' shall mean the

- Schools' Forums (England) Regulations 2002 and the Schools' Forum (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2005;
- Local Education Authority (LEA) and Schools' Budget Regulations;
- Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) in the Financing of Maintained Schools Regulations.

2. Functions

2.1 In accordance with Regulations, the Schools' Forum of the London Borough of Enfield shall:

- be consulted on the Local Authority school funding formula;
- be consulted on issues, specified in regulations, in connection with the Schools' Budget;
- be consulted on service contracts.

2.2 The Council will also consult the Forum on other matters connected with the Schools' Budget or on matters connected with the Local Authority revenue budgets or capital expenditure as it sees fit.

2.3 The Forum may scrutinize and challenge the Local Authority's application of funds to the Schools' budget, Delegated Schools' Budget, Central CSA Budgets and Capital Budgets. It may also scrutinize and challenge DfES/Central Government funding to Enfield Council for education.

2.4 The Forum may agree or refuse requests from the Local Authority to:

- increase the level of expenditure in the Schools' Budget above that provided for by regulations;
- vary the operation of the Minimum Funding Guarantee for specific schools to avoid them receiving unfair budget outcomes.

2.5 The Forum will consider referrals from the Member Governor Forum/Chairs' Briefing, any other consultative group and Schools' Governing Bodies.

- 2.6 The Forum may request detailed information to assist it in carrying out its functions and the Council will use its best endeavours to provide such information.
- 2.7 The Forum will abide by any changes to statutory provisions or changes to the regulatory framework for Schools' Funding; the Terms of Reference would be amended to reflect any such requirements.
- 2.8 The Forum will receive an annual update report covering such issues as pupil number projections, school organisation developments, etc,**
- 2.9 The Forum will be consulted on objections/comments received regarding statutory proposals to school organisation and the authority's recommendations.**

3. Membership and Attendance

Headteacher representatives will be elected from the relevant headteachers' conferences and governor representatives from the Member Governor Forum/Chairs' Briefing with regard to nominating at least one representative from the voluntary sector.

The early years representative will be nominate from the early years private, voluntary and independent sector.

The Teachers' Committee will nominate a representative member.

The forum shall consist of the following members:

Schools members

- 4 primary sector headteachers
- 4 primary sector governors
- 4 secondary sector headteachers
- 4 secondary sector governors
- 1 special sector headteacher
- 1 special sector governor

Non-schools members

- 1 Early years representative
- 1 Teachers' Committee
- Assistant Director Children's Access and Support
- Chair of Education, Skills and Leisure Scrutiny Panel

Total of 22 members with non-schools representatives forming 18% of the total membership.

Attendance

As well as members attending meetings, it is expected that the Lead Cabinet Member for Education, Children's Services and Leisure (ECSL), officers with

resources responsibilities from the Local Authority and an officer from the Learning and Skills Council will attend and participate in meetings of the Schools' Forum.

4. Substitutes

- 4.1 A member who is unable to attend a meeting may arrange for a substitute to attend to represent the same body and to have voting powers. This is to be notified in writing in advance of the meeting to the Clerk to the Schools' Forum (marked for the attention of the CSA Support Officer, Planning Quality and Performance, ECSSL) and shall remain effective until it is withdrawn.
- 4.2 A school member may only nominate a substitute member who:
- is a governor of the same sector of school of which the member in question is a governor.
 - is a headteacher of the same sector of school of which the member in question is a headteacher.
- 4.3 The member appointed by the Church of England or Roman Catholic Diocese or United Synagogue may only nominate a substitute member if these bodies (by which the member was nominated) consent to the proposed nomination.
- 4.4 The member appointed by the Teachers' Committee may only nominate a substitute who is also a member of the Teachers' Committee.

5. Tenure of Office

- 5.1 Each member shall be appointed to the Forum for a period of three years.
- 5.2 Any member may resign by giving written notice to the Clerk to the Forum.
- 5.3 A member's appointment shall end if the member concerned ceases to hold the office by virtue of which he or she became eligible for appointment to the Forum.
- 5.4 In light of any review of the Education, Children's Service and Leisure Department's participative and consultative arrangements the CSA shall exercise its powers to review the composition and constitution of the Schools' Forum. In so doing, the CSA will ensure that all relevant parties are consulted and that any change continues to comply with the regulations.
- 5.5 The appointment of an individual who fails to attend three consecutive meetings or arrange a substitute will become void. (This rule will not apply to the Member of the Learning Skills Council who has observer status on the Forum).

6. The Chair and Vice-Chair

- 6.1 The Forum shall appoint from its membership, excluding non-executive elected members or eligible officers, a Chair and Vice-Chair.

- 6.2 In the event of an election the Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed by a majority of the votes cast by individual members.
- 6.3 The Chair and Vice-Chair shall hold office for a period of one year. The election for these positions will take place at the first meeting and thereafter at the first meeting after the annual meeting of the Council.
- 6.4 In the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the office of the Chair or Vice-Chair the Forum shall at their next meeting elect one of their members to fill that vacancy and a member so elected will hold office until the first meeting after the annual meeting of the Council.
- 6.5 The Chair or Vice-Chair shall cease to hold office if s/he resigns her/his office by giving written notice to the Clerk, or if s/he ceases to qualify as a member of the Forum.

7. Meetings

- 7.1 The Forum shall meet at least twice each year.
- 7.2 Further meetings may be called with the agreement of the Chair or by decision of the Forum or to enable the Forum to carry out its tasks effectively.
- 7.3 Every member shall be given written notice and an agenda at least seven clear days before the date of the meeting.
- 7.4 From time to time the Forum will set up ad hoc working groups to deal in greater detail with matters that require more time than is available in the full Forum meetings and will report to the full Forum meetings.

8. Public Access

All documents and proceedings shall be open to the public unless the Forum resolves that there is good reason for documents or proceedings to be kept confidential.

9. Quorum

The quorum for the meeting shall be nine members representing 40% of the total membership.

10. Voting

Any question to be decided at a meeting of the Forum shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members present. In the case of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

11. Conduct and Declarations of Interest

- 11.1 In carrying out their functions, members of the Forum shall act in accordance with the seven principles of public life set out in the report of the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- 11.2 Members of the Forum shall declare an interest in any proposal which directly affects a school at which they are a governor or headteacher or which their children attend or in which they have a pecuniary interest. Any member with such an interest shall declare it and withdraw from the discussion and take no part in the decision. Where it is clear that a decision in which a member has such an interest is likely to arise at a particular meeting, the member concerned may wish to invite a substitute to attend that meeting.

12. Expenses and Training

- 12.1 Members of the Forum shall be entitled to claim reasonable expenses as outlined in the CSA's policy for the payment of such expenses.
- 12.2 The costs of training course fees and reasonable travel expenses to enable attendance on such courses for members of the Forum to increase their expertise, and knowledge to carry out their School's Forum duties effectively, will be a first call on the schools' budget. Applications for such fees/expenses should be made to the Assistant Director (Strategy and Resources). In the event of a dispute over whether a course should be funded, the Chair will be the decision-maker and will take account of the resources available from the budget for the Forum's activities. This budget will be reviewed annually.