

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL SCHOOLS FORUM

Report Title: Schools Forum Constitution and Working Groups

Meeting date: 13 June 2023

Report of: Dan Barton, Assistant Director, SEND, Education & Inclusion

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Schools Forum members on the constitution for the Cumberland Schools Forum.
- 1.2 The Schools Forum is asked to consider whether working groups should be set up and if so agree the frequency of meetings and terms of reference for the group(s).

2.0 Link to Council Plan Priorities

- 2.1 Ensuring that schools are appropriately represented at Schools Forum is supportive of the Council Plan “to improve the health and wellbeing of its residents” and the priority to “address inequalities and enable its residents to access opportunities that will empower them to achieve their goals.”

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 The Schools Forum are asked to note the constitution and are asked to decide whether to set up any working groups.

4.0 Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendation

- 4.1 Each local authority is required by law to establish a Schools Forum as set out in the Schools Forums (England) regulations 2012.
- 4.2 As part of the preparation for the Local Government Review whereby Cumbria County Council ceased to exist on 1 April 2023 and was replaced by two new unitary authorities, the shadow executive members for Cumberland Council agreed the constitution for the new Cumberland Schools Forum effective from 1 April 2023 at their meeting on 16 February 2023.

- 4.3 It was agreed that the Schools Forum should be made of 16 school and 6 non-school members. The constitution is attached at Appendix 1 for reference.
- 4.4 The Schools Forum are allowed to set up working groups to discuss specific issues and can make recommendations to the full Schools Forum. Under the former Cumbria Schools Forum arrangements there was a Budget and a SEN working group. The Budget group considered the impact of any proposals relating to the schools funding formula and the SEN group considered the financial arrangements for supporting children with SEN ahead of full Schools Forum. Most members of the Schools Forum were either a member of the Budget and/or SEN group. There were 3 meetings of each group per year, however, more recently the meetings have been joint and many of the papers reviewed at the working group meetings have also gone to full Schools Forum for consideration.
- 4.5 Provisional meetings dates for working groups have been set out in the attached updated Meeting Schedule and Microsoft Teams meeting invitations sent to Schools Forum members. The Schools Forum members are asked to consider whether working groups are required or whether these dates should be held in diaries for any potential task and finish group work that may arise during the year, if the dates are not required the meetings can be withdrawn. Potentially the October date could be used as a training/refresher session for new Westmorland & Furness Schools Forum members and former Cumbria Schools Forum members.
- 4.6 If Schools Forum decide that working group(s) are required frequency of meetings, membership of the group(s) including chair, and terms of reference will need to be agreed.

5.0 Options

5.1 Schools Forum can:

Option 1

- Establish a working group(s) and:
 - agree membership(s) and chair(s);
 - decide on frequency of meetings (no more than 3 per year);
 - agree the terms of reference.

Or

Option 2

- Hold the provisional working group meeting dates for any potential task and finish groups that may arise during the year.

6.0 Financial & Other Relevant Implications

- 6.1 The establishment of working groups or task and finish groups to discuss specific issues relating to finance arrangements for education providers provides challenge and support to the local authority when making changes to financial arrangements that may impact the provision of education.

7 June 2023

Appendices:

1. Cumberland Schools Forum Constitution
2. Updated Meeting Schedule

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Westmorland
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Westmorland & Furness Council