

DRAFT - Appendix A
New Audit Recommendations

No: 01	Priority: 1 Prudent
Finding:	It is noted that Stockton Schools forum have recently reviewed the operating procedures/constitution document following the changes in regulations. Although the discussion is minuted, there is no evidence that it has been finalised and approved by the forum. In addition, the new regulations require the constitution to be open and transparent. The auditor reviewed 10 other local authority school forums and found updated constitutions were published on the respective council websites.
Risk and Implications:	New regulations are not being followed by Stockton Schools Forum.
Recommendation:	The constitution/operating procedure document should be approved by the schools forum and published on the councils website.
Responsible Officer Comments:	The constitution was agreed at the 10 th Sept 2012 meeting, but subsequently one governor raised a number of queries and questions with this – hence then for a request for you to do an audit on the Forum.
Responsible Officer:	Lucy Emmerson
Please Provide an Implementation Date:	31 st July 2013

No: 02	Priority: 1 Prudent
Finding:	The recent regulation changes, have included a recommendation on the length of terms of office for forum members should not hinder the structure (as this needs to reflect pupil numbers from the various sectors). A review of 10 other Local authority school forums found the length of a term of office to be in between two and four years. Currently membership is three years in Stockton. Due to the increase in conversations to academy status there is a risk that the length of a term of office could be impractical.
Risk and Implications:	The effectiveness of the forum may be compromised if the ratios are not flexible for changes in circumstances
Recommendation:	During the approval process for the constitution, consideration should be given to reducing the standard length of the terms of office as this needs to be flexible to incorporate any changes to the structure that may be required.
Responsible Officer Comments:	
Responsible Officer:	Lucy Emmerson
Please Provide an Implementation Date:	31 st July 2013

No: 03	Priority: 1 Prudent
Finding:	There is no formal training process for forum members and no formal induction process in place. Informal training has however,

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	has been undertaken on request. The operating procedures/constitution do not mention training.
Risk and Implications:	Members may not fully understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of the schools forum.
Recommendation:	Consideration should be given to formalising training arrangements for forum members, these should then be outlined in the constitution document
Responsible Officer Comments:	
Responsible Officer:	David New
Please Provide an Implementation Date:	31 st July 2013

No: 04	Priority: 1 Prudent
Finding:	The arrangements for substitutes for absent forum members have recently been discussed, and a system has been approved. It is noted that eight out of the ten school forum constitutions examined had the arrangements for substitutes fully included and recorded.
Risk and Implications:	The absence of written procedures could cause confusion and dispute.
Recommendation:	Consideration should be given to include the substitution arrangements in the constitution in the event of dispute.
Responsible Officer Comments:	
Responsible Officer:	Lucy Emmerson
Please Provide an Implementation Date:	31 st July 2013

No: 05	Priority: 1 Prudent
Finding:	It should also be noted that the new regulations encourage contacts to be listed and updates to be sent to schools, many other councils have a dedicated forum page on the website with email address of all representatives enabling contact and communication
Risk and Implications:	The new regulations requirements for openness are not being fully adhered to
Recommendation:	Consideration should be given to including details of members of the Forum contact details on the councils website.
Responsible Officer Comments:	I'm unsure e agenda lends itself to this but this will be explored. The Council is also revamping its website at present and there may be opportunities to review as part of this.
Responsible Officer:	Lucy Emmerson

PROTECT

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*Children, Education and Social Care
Schools Forum*

<i>Please Provide an Implementation Date:</i>	31 st July 2013
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