

Dear Colleagues,

**Schools Forum Membership – Academies Members**

Under national Regulations, every local authority is required to establish a Schools Forum. Its primary role is to act as a formal consultative body, to recommend to the Local Authority how the funding, which the Government provides for schools, academies, other providers and for individual pupils (the Dedicated Schools Grant) is managed. In particular, the Local Authority is required to consult the Schools Forum on:

* The formula, which is used to delegate funding to mainstream primary and secondary schools and academies.
* The funding formula, and other financial arrangements, which are made for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, in Pupil Referral Units and education of children otherwise than at school.
* The formula, and administrative arrangements, for the funding of the entitlements to early years education.

The Schools Forum also has some specific decision making powers.

The Forum has a website, where you can access meetings information and past minutes, reports and agendas.

<https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=160&Year=0>

Under the Regulations, Forum representatives have to be chosen from and be elected by their constituent group (i.e. members representing academies must be elected by academies). Representatives serve for a period of 2 calendar years and roughly 50% are refreshed each year, in order to provide for continuity of experience. Incumbent members can stand for re-nomination / re-election at the end of their membership term.

The Forum currently has 35 members in total, of which 15 are representatives of academies. Within the 15:

* 1 membership is ring-fenced for representation from Academy Special Schools (with the member being elected by Academy Special Schools). This membership is currently occupied, by Dominic Wall (Co-op Academy Southfield).
* 1 membership is ring-fenced for representation from Alternative Provision Academies (with the member being elected by our Alternative Provision Academy). This membership is currently occupied, by Richard Bottomley (Bradford Alternative Provision Academy Central).
* 13 memberships are available for the wider representation of mainstream primary and secondary phase academies. 7 of these 13 memberships are currently occupied, by:

Carol Dewhirst OBE, Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust

Tehmina Hashmi, Bradford Academy

Deborah Howarth, Bronte Academy Trust

Ashley Reed, Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust

Sir Nick Weller, Dixons Academies Trust

Helen Williams, Moorlands Learning Trust

Wahid Zaman, Nurture Trust

**6 of the 13 will be vacant (at September 2021), for which nominations are now sought.**

**We encourage you to discuss this opportunity within your Trust.**

To be eligible for one of these memberships, you should either be employed by an academies trust, or you should be a trustee of an academy board, in Bradford. Ideally these memberships would be filled by CEOs / principals / headteachers, or by finance directors / business managers, or by trustees, of primary / secondary phase mainstream academies in Bradford. Members are expected to contribute to discussions, and to act as a link between the Forum and the wider school / academy community, regarding the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant and formula funding.

The Regulations actually require that academies themselves establish their own membership arrangements. This is quite difficult to achieve in practical terms, however. As a result, the Local Authority may guide academies in their arrangements and also has the power to nominate academies members in the absence of elections or of other processes established by academies themselves. Academies in Bradford do not currently have a Forum membership election process and therefore, in seeking immediately to ensure that effective and balanced representation for academies is in place at September 2021 (for the important 2022/23 budget setting round), the Local Authority is taking a more direct approach to the filling of the 6 vacant memberships at this time.

As a minimum, the Local Authority wishes to ensure that academy membership arrangements provide balanced representation, between primary and secondary phases, and also provide representation across the different academies trust that are now in the Bradford District and who are affected by the formula funding decisions that the Local Authority takes. This may mean that the Local Authority may not take forward certain nominations that might be received e.g. where there is more than one nomination from a single Trust.

An election may be needed following the collection of nominations, depending on the number of nominations received (if the number exceeds 6).

I am writing therefore, to ask if you would like to put your name (or someone else from your trust) forward for nomination / election to serve as an academies representative for the period September 2021 to July 2023. If you wish to do so, please email me at andrew.redding@bradford.gov.uk, by **Monday 21 June 2021**. Please ring me on 01274 432678 if you would like to know more about the Forum and the work involved in being a member as well about the process for the nomination and election of members.

Yours faithfully,



Andrew Redding

Business Advisor (Schools)