

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 / elected by their constituent group (i.e. members representing academies must be nominated from / elected by academies). Representatives serve for a period of 2 academic 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.

At September 2023, the Forum will have 35 members in total, of which 17 are representatives of academies. Within the 17:

* 2 memberships are ring-fenced for representation from Academy Special Schools (with the members being elected by Academy Special Schools via the District Achievement Partnership). These memberships are occupied, by Michelle Farr (Co-op Academy Southfield) and Lyndsey Brown (Oastler School).
* 1 membership is ring-fenced for representation from Alternative Provision Academies (with the member being elected by our Alternative Provision Academy). This membership is occupied, by Richard Bottomley (Bradford Alternative Provision Academy Central).
* 14 memberships are available for the wider representation of mainstream primary and secondary phase academies. 12 of the 14 posts are currently occupied and there are 2 vacancies. The terms of office of 5 of the 12 members ends in July 2023. The current 12 members are as follows (highlighted in bold at the top of the list = term of office ends in July 2023).

**Mathew Atkinson, Priestley Academies Trust**

**Victoria Birch, Beckfoot Academy Trust**

**Heather Lacey, Shirley Manor Academy**

**Andrew Morley, Blessed Christopher Wharton Academies Trust**

**Michael Thorp, Pennine Academies Trust**

Brent Fitzpatrick OBE, Exceed Academies Trust

Sarah Murray, Exceed Academies Trust

Ashley Reed, Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust

Amanda Sleney, Dixons Academies Trust

Helen Williams, Moorlands Learning Trust

Wahid Zaman, Nurture Trust

Melanie Saville, Bradford Academy

**For September therefore, we are seeking nominations for 7 available membership positions (for the 2 vacancies and for the 5 membership positions, where the current member’s term of office ends in July 2023).** As a reminder, incumbent members are permitted put themselves forward for re-nomination.

**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 Schools Forum and the wider school / academy community, regarding the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant and formula funding arrangements.

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 Schools Forum membership election process and therefore, in seeking to ensure that effective and balanced representation for academies is in place at September 2023 (for the important 2024/25 budget setting round), the Local Authority is taking a more direct approach to the filling of the 7 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 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 are a large number of nominations 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 7).

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 2023 to July 2025. If you wish to do so, please email me at andrew.redding@bradford.gov.uk, by **Monday 12 June 2023**. Please ring me on 01274 432678 if you would like to know more about the Schools Forum, and the work involved in being a member, or have any other queries.

Yours faithfully,



Andrew Redding

Business Advisor (Schools)