

3rd February 2012

To - Chairs of all Academies in Warwickshire

Dear Colleague

Election of Academy Members to the Warwickshire Schools Forum

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the Warwickshire Schools Forum to invite you to agree arrangements for the election of academy members to this Forum.

The Schools Forum is keen to ensure that Academies are represented by active members who will represent their views and work in the interests of Warwickshire pupils.

Background

The Schools Forum is a statutory body. It must be consulted by the Local Authority on various financial issues including –

- Changes to the school funding formula
- Changes to the schools' scheme of financial management
- Financial issues relating to the arrangements for pupils with SEN, pupil referral units, early years provision, schools meals, allocation of central government grant
- Increases in central spend on prudential borrowing, termination of employment costs, combined services, schools' specific contingency, special needs transport.

The Schools Forum usually meets 4 times a year. Due to the change in the make-up of schools within the county, the Local Authority has recently proposed changes to its membership, to take effect from 17th May 2012. These changes are in line with The Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2010.

The voting membership is representative of pupil numbers in each sector. The new membership will comprise (in accordance with Regulations 4 and 7) –

- 4 members representing Academies
- 4 members representing Maintained Secondary Schools
- 12 members representing Primary Schools
- 1 member representing Nursery Schools
- 1 member representing Special Schools
- 2 members representing the Church authorities
- 1 member representing the Local Authority 14-19 partnership

It is recognised that the Academies, Secondary and Primary groups will need to be reviewed annually to take account of the conversion of schools to academy status.

Legislation states that the Academy Members must be elected to the Schools Forum by the governing bodies of the Academies in Warwickshire. As this is a new situation, the Local Authority is offering to assist in this process as detailed in the remainder of this letter. Elections must take place by 31st March 2012.

Proposed election arrangements for Academy Members of the Schools Forum

Academies may choose who they wish to represent them. Experience has shown that it is very helpful to have Headteacher and Governor representation from each sector, representing – as far as possible – the geographical spread of the county.

In the absence of an existing mechanism for dealing with the election of academy members to the Schools Forum, academies are invited to agree the following arrangements –

1. Academy governing bodies agree that their Schools Forum membership will comprise 2 Governors and 2 Headteachers.
2. Governor Members - 2 Academy Governor Members will be nominated by the Governors' Forum Steering Group at its meeting on 20th February 2012. (The Steering Group includes representatives of both schools and academies). In addition, any academy governing body which wishes to nominate a governor may do so by completing the attached nomination form and submitting it to governors@warwickshire.gov.uk by 2nd March 2012. The election of these 2 Academy Governor Members will take place at the Spring Governors' Forum on Saturday 24th March at 9.30am at Wedgnock House, Warwick. Each academy governing body will be able to cast its vote through their Chair or another governor attending the meeting.
3. Headteacher Members – Academy governing bodies will authorise their Headteacher to vote for 2 Headteacher members at the Secondary Headteachers' Conference on 16th March 2012. Any Academy Headteacher who wishes to put forward a nomination may do so by submitting a Headteacher nomination form to katiepenfold@warwickshire.gov.uk by 2nd March 2012.

We hope you will agree that this provides a practical approach to the election of Academy members. Should you have any objections to this approach, it would be appreciated if you would let me know by **Wednesday 15th February**.

It would be helpful if you would confirm your governing body's agreement to these arrangements by completing and returning the attached reply slip to - **governors@warwickshire.gov.uk by Wednesday 15th February**.

Yours sincerely



Peter Kent
Chair of Warwickshire Schools Forum

Email: Iss@lawrencesherriffschool.com