



Diocese of **Hallam** *Schools Together*

About St Francis and St Clare
our
Catholic Multi Academy Trusts

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

May 2022

*Issued by the Diocese of Hallam in partnership with
St Clare and St Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trusts*

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide the most up to date information for Governing Bodies, School Leaders and Staff, addressing questions which have arisen during the set up phase of the Catholic MATs.

The Diocese of Hallam, working with St Clare and St Francis Catholic MAT Boards are keen to ensure that your questions are answered and that you have opportunities to engage and discuss your school's journey as part of the Bishop's plan for our schools.

We have already shared the documents setting out the vision and these are available on the Hallam website. Please keep referring to these as the benefits we identified in the spring and summer of bringing schools together into two Catholic MATs still stand and are being realised now by a number of schools within the Diocese as we start to work as two Catholic MATs.

This FAQ has the following sections:

A. BENEFITS OF A CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY TRUST MODEL

B. GOVERNANCE

C. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

D. STAFFING

E. FINANCE

A. BENEFITS OF A CATHOLIC MULTI ACADEMY TRUST MODEL

"It is vitally important that the Catholic education system in the Diocese of Hallam is secured, protected and developed further for the benefit of future generations of children and young people, that our schools continue to flourish and that every child who attends one of our schools receives the best possible Catholic education."

(extract from Bishop Ralph's letter to schools January 2021)

The Diocese has reflected carefully and has concluded that the current arrangement of schools, academies and a MAT does not best serve this vision and that the Catholic Multi Academy Trust model provides the most effective way to secure Catholic Education for the long term in the Diocese of Hallam. The Diocese has presented the plans to the DfE and DfE are supporting the proposals. Trustees summarised the many benefits of being part of a CMAT in the update document issued in February. The reasons given included:

- **Stronger and wider collaboration through a shared vision and values:** MATs build on existing strengths and expertise, such as specialist hubs, teaching schools, NLEs, NLGs which can be scaled up so that benefits are felt by all schools. Core values are shared, particularly relating to ethos and wellbeing.
- **Deepening of distinctive ethos:** A Catholic MAT has a strong shared ethos and set of values which are embedded in all aspects of the MATs work.
- **Stronger Strategic Leadership:** School leaders and teachers can combine their knowledge and planning abilities to work on challenges and solutions together. Governors and Trustees can draw on each other's experience to formulate strategic approaches.

- **School Improvement Strategy:** A strategy designed around the needs of the schools in the MAT can be flexed according to immediate need and expertise made available for school to school support.
- **Access to Specialist Resources:** With the resources available in a MAT, specialist knowledge can be accessed in many different areas, spanning academic, extra-curricular and operational functions.
- **Access to Funding Streams:** MATs are well-placed to propose wide ranging projects which attract government funding for the benefit of many schools. The Schools Condition Allocation is also allocated at MAT level in a large MAT providing opportunities for taking a strategic approach to funding capital works and improvements to the learning environments.
- **High Quality Professional Development:** This can be organised across multiple schools, thus spreading the cost per school and upskilling as many individuals as possible per session.
- **Career Development:** Every member of staff has access to career planning support. Succession planning becomes strategic with opportunities brokered across the MAT.
- **Shared Accountability:** As a Trust represents multiple schools, it is in its interest (and duty) to raise the profile of each, in line with raising expectations.
- **Delivering Economies of Scale:** A Trust is able to purchase as a whole (not just procurement of goods and services but back room services), thereby achieving economies of scale not achievable by schools as individuals. With ever tightening budgets, this can help schools free up resources and time to allocate to teaching and learning.
- **Reducing Duplication of Effort:** Through centralization of services, MATs reduce significantly duplication of effort in areas such as financial returns, processes and audit.
- **Access to Data to inform decisions:** The MAT has access to trust wide data where trends can be identified and interventions targeted, for example on standards, staff and pupil wellbeing.
- **Reducing Policy Burdens:** MATs provide a large number of central policies and procedures for core business services, freeing up governor and leadership time to focus on their school's priorities.
- **Supporting Compliance duties:** MATs provide support for complaints, data protection, freedom of information, HR procedures, ensuring that no school is exposed to unnecessary risk from procedural errors.

Where can I find more information about the Diocesan Vision and the benefits of Catholic MATs?

Please refer to the Diocese of Hallam website under the SCHOOLS section:

<https://hallam-diocese.com/schools-home/mat-development>

B. GOVERNANCE

Headlines:

- *Local Governors are an essential part of the governance arrangements in a CMAT with responsibility for a wide range of functions – we need to retain expertise at the local level*
- *Foundation Governors are vital to upholding and developing the Catholic ethos*
- *Chairs of Governors feed into Trust Board decision-making through the Chairs Forum*
- *Decision-making will be at the point closest to delivery*

1. Who is responsible for the delivery of the Catholic MAT programme in the Diocese of Hallam?

The Bishop, through the Diocese of Hallam Trustee, is ultimately accountable for the MAT programme as it is the Bishop who has responsibility for providing school places, for determining the future of diocesan schools and for appointing those foundation governors and Directors whose role it is to implement the Diocesan Vision.

The Diocese has set up two companies, St Francis Catholic MAT and St Clare Catholic MAT each with Directors appointed on the basis of their skills, experience and commitment to Catholic education. In turn, these boards have appointed an Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and permanent Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for each of the two CMATs. These Boards, the CEOs and CFOS, in partnership with the schools and the Schools Department are now building the MATs in readiness for opening in September 2022.

2. Will there be a lead school in each CMAT?

The CMATs have been set up as two new companies and are not based on a “lead School”. There will be no lead school in each CMAT. Every schools is an equal partner.

3. Will the CEO be Catholic?

Any permanent appointment of a CEO must be Catholic. The Bishop has discretion in exceptional circumstances to appoint a non-Catholic if this is on a **temporary** or **interim** basis if there are no suitable Catholic candidates. The Bishop has approved the appointments of Steve Davies as Interim CEO for St Clare and Heidi Adcock as Interim CEO for St Francis. Both take up post on 1st January 2022.

4. What is the role of a foundation governor in the CMAT?

Foundation governors are appointed (and may be removed) by the Bishop of Hallam. They are an essential part of the governance arrangements. Their fundamental responsibility is to ensure, on behalf of the Bishop, that at all times the school is conducted as a Catholic school and that Religious Education and Collective Worship take place in accordance with the requirements laid down by the Bishop. This responsibility extends to joint Church of England/Catholic schools too. Foundation governors are expected to uphold the views and wishes of the Bishop in all matters – “*to know the mind of the Bishop*”. This aspect does not change in the CMAT.

5. Are governor roles changing in the CMATs?

The fundamental role of a foundation governor in terms of ensuring that a school’s Catholic ethos is maintained and developed will not change. Foundation governors will still be responsible for ensuring that the school’s academic standards are as high as possible by working with the MAT to support and hold school leaders to account. They will also be responsible for ensuring that resources are well spent. It is also recognised that local governors play a vital role in maintaining and developing links with both the parish and local community. However, in a Multi-Academy Trust, governance arrangements vary in that the MAT is the legal entity and is responsible for all of the academies within it. The MAT is the employer of all staff working both within any central team and in any of the academies. It is also ultimately responsible for standards and budgets in all of the academies and will therefore retain certain decisions at Board level.

6. Will there still be “governing bodies”?

Legally, a Multi-Academy Trust is not required to have local governing bodies unless it wishes to. Hallam Trustees have always felt that it is very important to retain governors at a local level as it is recognised that our local governors have detailed knowledge of the school and the community that it serves. For this reason, the Diocese and the Catholic MATs have written into their governance arrangements a committee at local level and will empower local governors to carry out the roles which they are best placed to do very effectively such as overseeing the school’s Catholic Life, maintaining and strengthening links with the local parish and holding the school’s leaders to account on standards and effective use of resources – the core functions of a governor.

Governors will be called “Local Governors” and Governing Bodies will be called “Local Academy Committees” in the new CMATs.

7. What is the new governance structure?

The structure is set out in the Articles of Association. There are Members, Board of Directors and

Committees, one of which is the Local Academy Committee. The Scheme of Delegation available under the Governance tab [here](#) sets out the responsibilities of each of these and will provide detailed guidance about where the decision-making, responsibility and accountability for each function sits.

The structure includes a Chairs Forum linking local academy committees to Trust Board decision-making.

8. Will staff and parents from each school be represented in the CMAT?

There will be 2 parent governors on each Local Academy Committee.

There will be no category of “Staff Governor”. However, Staff Voice is important and therefore the CMAT will expect that schools will take into account staff voice. This is in line with guidance from the National Governance Association which encourages staff attendance at local academy committee meetings to report on their areas of expertise whilst recognising the conflicts involved if staff were to take part in governor procedures or to challenge the school leadership. The role of staff attending meetings to provide professional input and advice based on their particular role or subject knowledge is extremely important and should continue.

Directors are appointed to the CMAT Board based on skills and experience, in order to ensure a breadth of knowledge and different skills needed so that the Board is able to discharge its duties effectively and without bias towards any individual school.

9. What is the status of a local academy committee in the new CMAT?

The local academy committee is a committee of the CMAT and will take decisions, monitor and be consulted on matters as set out in the Scheme of Delegation. The CMAT is the legal entity.

10. Will the current composition and size of governing bodies change?

When a school joins one of the CMATs, Local Academy Committees will be required to have two parent governors and a minimum of four foundation governors. Please note that this does not mean that you can only have four foundation governors. If you already have more than four, then this is a bonus and there is no reason for these foundation governors to stand down. We are keen to retain expertise at the local level.

There must also be a majority of foundation governors present at any meeting. It is possible, however, for Local Academy Committees to seek to appoint (or keep) other members as long as the number of foundation governors is in the majority by 2. This means that governing bodies can discuss with the trust board keeping members who are not foundation governors or parent governors as they move to being Local Academy Committees, again keeping open the option to retain expertise so that we continue to benefit from the generous service of a wide range of people in overseeing our schools.

As noted above, members of staff cannot serve as local governors and Headteachers will not be a member of the Local Academy Committee although it is expected that headteachers will attend all meetings. Other members of staff may also be asked to attend meetings in order to provide input as and when required but will not have voting rights.

11. What about terms of office for local governors?

Terms of office for foundation governors (and parent governors) will remain at 4 years. Present terms will continue when a school joins one of the CMATs, ie the clock won't be restarted. In the case of foundation governors' terms of office, there will be a discussion between the school, the Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and the Schools' Department regarding replacements when individual terms of office come to an end. There is always the possibility of requesting to serve as a foundation governor at a nearby school. We would happily discuss this and can be flexible to suit the needs of individual schools.

12. Will our clergy have a place on the Local Academy Committee?

It is very important that our clergy are present on as many Local Academy Committees as possible. Where priests are existing foundation governors, we hope that they will continue.

13. Will Local Academy Committees manage the school finances?

This is a change in emphasis of the governors' role. The specific role of governors has never been to manage the school finances, that is an operational issue for the school headteacher and business manager, but governors have been responsible for ensuring the effective use of school funds and ensuring that the school has robust financial controls in place. In the CMAT arrangements governors still have to ensure that school funds are being used effectively. It will be part of the role to challenge the use of the funds in the school and seek evidence from the school that the funds have had the impact expected. The Local Academy Committee will ensure that the priorities set out in the school development plan are reflected in the budget put forward to the CMAT. The Chief Financial Officer will work closely with the headteachers to set budgets that meet the requirements and priorities for the school whilst being within the CMAT budget setting strategy and local academy committees will have input into this. The CMAT will put in place mechanisms for reporting spend against budget.

14. How much autonomy will the local academy committee have in the CMAT?

The Scheme of Delegation will set out where decisions / approvals / recommendations rest with each tier of governance. This document will be issued shortly and will be based on the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, namely that where sound governance allows and in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements of MATs, decision making will be at the point closest to delivery (Subsidiarity). For example, decisions relating to the day to day running of a school (including behaviour management, curriculum planning etc) will be for the school leaders to determine. Ultimate approval of budgets, staffing structures, policies relating to finance and HR for example will be for the CMAT to action as the CMAT is directly accountable for those areas - although schools will feed into this process. The CMAT will act in the best interests of all schools to ensure that those needing support get what they need (Solidarity) and the Scheme of Delegation will be set so as to facilitate the operation of the whole CMAT.

15. What are the accountability arrangements for the CMATs?

The Members hold the CMAT to account. The CEO is held to account by the Board of Directors who will also appoint an independent adviser/expert as part of the performance management process for the CEO. Also, the CEO is the Accounting Officer and is held to account by the ESFA. The CMAT is also held to account by the Secretary of State for Education through the Master Funding Agreement and by the Bishop in respect of the Catholic character, standards generally and adherence to the Trust Deed.

The CMAT is a Company and a Charity and therefore has a robust regulatory and statutory framework within which to operate.

16. Who are the Board of Directors? Are they elected or appointed?

The Board of Directors are appointed (just as they are in a Single Academy Trust) in line with the Articles of Association. The CMAT Boards are looking to fill remaining vacancies at Board level. If you or someone you know

would be interested in discussing a role on one of the CMAT boards please get in touch via Philip Patterson at schools@hallam-diocese.com

17. Who has the power to decide whether a Diocesan School will join a Diocesan CMAT?

- For diocesan maintained schools the governing body must pass a resolution to convert to academy status and express its wish to join the CMAT.
- For existing Single Academy Trusts, the Board of Directors (Governing Body) must pass a resolution to join the CMAT.
- For academies within MATs, the MAT Board of Directors must pass a resolution to transfer its academies to one of the new CMATs.

In all cases the resolutions must have the consent of the Bishop and for Joint Church schools, the consent of the relevant Anglican Diocese.

As all Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop with a clear expectation to “know the mind of the Bishop”, it follows that governing body decision making should be guided by the Bishop’s intentions, as well as being informed by the views of members of the school community.

Power to issue academy orders (so that a school can become an academy) and to approve that an academy can join a Multi Academy Trust rests with the Regional Schools’ Commissioner (RSC). Once governing bodies have resolved to convert to academy status (for schools not already academies) and to join a CMAT, then the RSC considers their application and must give approval before the process toward conversion/transfer can continue. The RSC’s role is to ensure that the CMATs are well set up to help the schools to thrive.

The Diocese and the two CMATs have been working closely with the RSC throughout this process.

18. Can a local academy committee decide unilaterally to leave the CMAT?

The local academy committee is a committee of the CMAT and the CMAT Board of Directors are the decision-making body in respect of academies joining and leaving the CMAT. However, the CMAT would require the consent of the Bishop for any school joining or leaving the CMAT, before applying to the RSC. A local academy committee cannot unilaterally decide to leave the CMAT.

19. What consultation is planned?

Where schools have already resolved to join St Clare or St Francis CMAT, their governing body’s decision has been informed by the views and questions of their school community, gathered through a consultation process.

Some schools are currently engaged in consultation with their communities about joining St Francis CMAT.

Other schools, whose governing bodies are ready to move forward, will begin consultation with their communities at a time agreed between them and St Francis or St Clare CMAT.

Once governing bodies have resolved to join a CMAT and their application has been approved by the RSC, there will follow a further TUPE consultation process. This is a statutory process for members of staff in place to ensure that they understand what, if any, impact the transfer will have on their contract of employment and to ensure that their voice is heard in that process. The conversions to the CMATs are ‘no measures’ conversions, which means that all conditions of service and continuity of service is maintained for all staff and there are no redundancies required as a result of the conversion.

**Where can I find more information about the governance arrangements
for St Francis and St Clare?**

Full details are set out in the Scheme of Delegation which is available on the Diocese of Hallam website under the SCHOOLS section:

<https://hallam-diocese.com/schools-home/mat-development>

C. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

Headlines:

- *The day to day running and management of schools is the responsibility of Headteachers*
- *Each academy will retain its uniqueness and identity*

20. Our school is successful and we have an established curriculum – will we be forced to adopt a centralised curriculum in the new CMAT?

The CMAT will not impose a curriculum on a school where the school is successful. There will be curriculum resources available centrally for schools requiring support.

21. Will we have to adopt a CMAT wide behaviour and learning policies provided by the CMAT?

The expectation is that Headteachers will continue to lead and manage their schools on a day to day basis. Behaviour and Learning Policies will need to reflect local needs and circumstances and will be for schools to develop and implement. Support will be available for schools if needed.

22. What will the CMAT policy be on inter-school pupil transfers?

Admission arrangements in the normal round will continue as before. In year transfers will be negotiated between schools as currently. Schools in the CMAT will continue to be part of the fair access protocols in place with local authorities and the CMAT will support schools in this approach.

23. Our school feeds into a secondary school in another Diocese. Will admissions and home to school transport be affected by us moving to the CMAT?

The location of the CMAT, ie that it is a "Hallam" CMAT, is not a factor in the provision of home to school transport. Home to school transport arrangements are determined by each local authority and eligibility factors such as income, distance, travelling time and denominational grounds are the relevant factors. Also, parents will still be able to choose a secondary school outside of the Hallam Diocese as the move to the CMAT does not change any of the feeder school arrangements already in place.

24. Will our teachers be directed to work at any school in the CMAT?

There will be many opportunities for career development in the CMATs as this is one of the key benefits for staff. However, staff working in a school will not be forced to work elsewhere.

25. Will my school be forced to restructure or make redundancies?

If your school is overstaffed now or is forecast to be (regardless of the CMAT) then the expectation is that you will continue to take the necessary action to manage this. The CMAT does not envisage restructuring staffing and making redundancies as a consequence of schools joining the CMAT. Please continue with any restructuring plans already in place.

26. What decisions will our school be allowed to make about recruitment?

Schools will continue to recruit to vacancies identified in their staffing structure with the agreement of the CMAT. The CMAT, as employer of all staff will support the recruitment process and may advise on job descriptions and grading. Full details are set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

How can I find out more about the management and organisation of our school?

The CMATs have set up a Heads' Group and a Chairs Group – please join these groups and get involved in the discussion to shape the future arrangements

The Scheme of Delegation decision planner provides an overview of decision-making at each tier

D. STAFFING

Headlines:

- ***Staff will transfer with continuous service and qualifying service recognised***
- ***Staff terms and conditions will be in line with national Teachers Pay and Support staff pay***
- ***The CMATs are committed to developing staff and using existing talent and expertise to deliver services in house where possible***

27. How will staff be affected by TUPE?

Staff will transfer with the protection of TUPE. The CMATs are committed to honouring national pay and conditions – the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document for teaching staff and the Green Book for support staff. Staff will transfer on their existing terms and conditions. There is no intention for the project to carry out a restructure prior to the set-up of the CMATs. There will be no detriment to staff as part of the TUPE transfer. This will be set out again as part of the TUPE transfer process.

28. Are there harmonised pay scales across the CMATs?

Staff will transfer on their current pay and terms and conditions. The CMAT will put in place its own pay scales for those staff joining from outside the Diocese. However, staff transferring from within the Diocese will not be forced to move to the new pay scales. New staff appointed to schools once the school has joined the CMAT will be on CMAT contracts and CMAT pay scales which will be fully in line with national pay and conditions. If a staff member who has transferred under TUPE then applies for another post within the CMAT then they will move to a CMAT contract of employment at that point. The CMAT may look at harmonisation of pay in the future but this is not planned at this stage.

29. How will staff contracts be protected?

Employees are protected when their business transfers to another employer under TUPE. This means that employees of schools and academies will transfer to their new employer (one of the new CMATs) on their current contracts of employment.

If you currently have a part time contract then that will continue when you transfer.

If you are on maternity leave on the transfer date you will transfer and return to your school as normal at the end of your maternity leave.

30. What happens to continuous service and qualifying service?

For staff transferring under TUPE there will be no loss of continuous service or qualifying service.

31. Will my job change in the new CMAT?

There will be new systems and processes as the CMAT grows, for example a single finance system across the CMAT. This will inevitably mean that day to day management of school finances will look different and will involve new ways of working. Full training will be available to ensure that staff currently working in these areas will understand the new roles and systems. The CMATs are committed to staff development and retaining expertise. It will be business as usual for classroom-based staff.

32. Will there be opportunities for me to work across the CMAT and develop my career?

Yes – definitely. One of the many benefits for staff of working within a CMAT is the opportunity for career development. This could be in the form of a secondment, a temporary role or by supporting another school. Staff will be encouraged to use their skills and expertise for the benefit of all.

33. I am employed by one school and work across a number of schools – will I still be able to do this?

Yes – your contract will transfer. Working across schools is one of the many benefits of CMATs and the new CMATs will be looking to build on this model. If you already work across a number of schools as part of a Federation arrangement then this will continue on transfer to the new CMAT.

34. Will I be forced to move to another school in the CMAT?

No – employees will not be forced to work at another school.

35. Can I apply for vacancies at another school in the CMAT?

Yes – vacancies will be notified and open to all schools within the CMAT.

36. My role includes clerking governing body meetings – will I still do this in the new MAT?

Yes – if that is part of your current contract then that will transfer through TUPE to the new MAT.

37. I work in the breakfast club and after school club which my school runs – will this continue?

Yes – if you are employed by the school in a breakfast club or after school club run by the school then your job will continue after the transfer to the new CMAT.

38. We have good working relationships with our local trade unions – will this continue?

Yes – we have invited all regional trade unions to meet with us prior to formal consultation to discuss the project. We welcome constructive dialogue with the TU side and will be encouraging wide representation during TUPE consultation. We intend to put in place a Trade Union Recognition Agreement (TURA) which will be discussed with TU regional and national colleagues.

39. I work in the school kitchen – will my job still exist in the new CMAT?

Yes – if you are employed by the school prior to transfer then you will transfer under TUPE when your school transfers to the new CMAT.

40. Are there risks of different staff roles in certain schools no longer existing?

The set-up of the CMAT does not involve a staff restructure. However, all schools are expected to manage their budgets, curriculum and staffing structures in line with the Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning outcomes. If a school is currently over-staffed or is running a deficit budget, or has falling pupil numbers which means it will be over-staffed in future years then the expectation is that schools will take the necessary action to address this situation prior to joining the CMAT, and this may involve roles changing or posts reducing.

Also, as with any school whether a SAT or part of a MAT, staffing requirements change over time and this requires Headteachers and Governing Bodies to review staffing structures to ensure that the structure meets the needs of the school and its pupils. The CMAT will operate in the same way.

41. Will we need to restructure in order to join the CMAT?

Every school is expected to have in place sound financial management which delivers a balanced in year budget. This requires every school to base their staffing, including class sizes and curriculum plan on current pupil numbers

and forecast pupil numbers (Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning). Schools which are currently overstaffed or are forecast to be overstaffed are expected to take necessary actions to reduce staffing. This is not restructuring because of the CMAT – this is sound budget management.

42. What is the central team structure?

Currently the CFOs are looking at opportunities to use the talent and expertise already existing in schools to carry out functions, for example payroll.

There is a strong desire to deliver services in-house with current staff rather than looking to buy in a service provider. This will provide opportunities for staff and protect jobs.

43. What training will be available for business support staff?

The CMATs are working towards establishing a MAT wide finance system. The systems have not yet been confirmed. However, training for staff in any new system will be provided as a priority.

How can I find out more about transferring to St Clare or St Francis?

Join one of the workplace meetings which will be scheduled by your school as part of the TUPE process.

A copy of the detailed measures letter is available on the Diocese of Hallam website under the SCHOOLS section:

<https://hallam-diocese.com/schools-home/mat-development>

E. FINANCE

Headlines:

- ***Schools and academies joining the CMATs will retain their capital and revenue balances and any reserves or carry forwards***
- ***Full training will be provided for anyone currently working on finance***
- ***The burdens of academy returns will be lifted and managed by the CMAT***
- ***Accounting Officer and Chief Financial Officer responsibilities will be held at CMAT level***
- ***Both CMATs are committed to developing the talent and expertise already in schools to deliver services in house***

44. How is the running of the CMAT to be funded?

The annual budgets for the CMATs are not yet finalised. However, each CMAT as a whole will operate more efficiently as an organisation of multiple schools rather than each school buying services such as legal and audit individually, to give just two examples.

Any local authority de-delegated funds currently deducted from VA school budgets will be passed over on conversion and will be part of that school's budget. The government does not provide additional funding for the running of the CMATs once they are running as it expects the CMATs to be able to cover any new central costs

through the savings made through economies of scale. There is, however, funding available to help MATs in the set up and later growth stage, to help them to become established without taking money away from the benefit of the pupils.

Experience of other MATs, particularly as they grow in size, is that they are able to deliver economies of scale which increase over time, so that the savings more than cover any central costs for the management and operation of the MAT. We have carried out initial due diligence on the financial position of all schools and Trustees are confident that the financial position is sound.

45. Can we have a breakdown by school of the services received from the CMAT?

The CMAT will run central/shared services from the agreed top slice (5% maximum proposed). Schools will receive details about which services will be provided centrally when these have been confirmed. However, schools will not receive an itemised list of services specific to their school. For example, it is likely that there will be a single legal contract and a single contract for audit. This will cover all schools and be funded from the top slice.

46. Are schools having to pay for the set-up of the CMATs from their budgets?

No – we have access to funds from the academy conversion grants which will be used to fund the legal and some set up costs. We have arranged a central legal contract to deliver the conversion and transfer work which is cost effective and removes the need for schools to pay for this work. We have also secured a grant of £100,000 from the Diocesan Pilot Fund which will support the work of the CMAT programme in the Hallam Diocese. We are also applying to the Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF) for a grant for each CMAT. The amount of this funding is yet to be confirmed.

47. Will the CMAT manage the budget centrally or delegate at school level?

The CMAT is accountable for the overall budget and the income and expenditure for the CMAT. ESFA returns and annual audits are carried out at CMAT level and will be submitted by the CMAT. All school budgets will be approved by the CMAT working with the Headteacher. It has yet to be decided the extent to which transactions will take place centrally or at school level as this will be dependent in part on the choice of the finance system. It is likely that orders will continue to be placed at school level against the agreed budget. Arrangements for paying invoices are to be confirmed. However, any changes to current working practices will be introduced over time in a managed way to reduce impact on schools and to ensure staff are trained and have capacity. This may take place over several months.

48. What will happen to built up reserves and capital funds for individual schools?

The CMAT has no plans to pool reserves from schools and therefore each school will transfer with its current balances and will retain those. Similarly, if a school has capital balances these will transfer with it to the new MAT and will be held in that school's pot.

The CMATs will not be removing funds from schools when they join the CMAT.

49. What will schools receive from the Diocesan per pupil contribution?

The Diocesan per pupil amounts contribute to the costs of Diocesan officers carrying out the necessary duties to provide assurance to the Bishop. More detail on these functions will be set out in the Diocesan Protocol document which forms part of the Scheme of Delegation. Both will be available shortly.

50. What centralised services will be in place, in particular audit?

These are yet to be confirmed but are likely to include Finance, HR and Audit. Audit particularly will be at CMAT level and therefore the first full annual audit for the CMAT will be carried out via a single contract at CMAT level.

51. How will we afford the centralised services as our budget is already over stretched?

The CMAT will deliver significant savings through economies of scale and central procurement over time. Due diligence indicates that the two CMATs are in a sound financial position.

Where can I find out more about how finances will work in St Clare or St Francis?

The CFOs are now in post and will be engaging directly with business support staff to explain how the finances will operate in practice.

May 2022