

Consilium Academies - Scheme of Delegation Agreement Central Provision

Effective Date: 1 January 2016

1. Context

This agreement is linked to the overarching Scheme of Delegation Policy for Consilium Academies and provide detailed agreement on delegated activity which support operational management of the following specified areas:

1. Financial Management
2. Human Resources, including staffing
3. Facilities and Resources, including Information Technology, systems and processes

This will enable effective decision making to take place which supports the operations of the Trust and it's academies.

The agreement will be reviewed and updated on a termly basis in order to meet the growing needs of the Multi Academy Trust led by the Consilium Academies.

2. Financial Management

2.1 Accountancy & Audit requirements

In line with EFA requirements, Consilium Academies Central Team and each academy within the MAT will make sure that all appropriate audit arrangements are in place and that budget and financial forecasts are provided to both the EFA and the Trust Board at the agreed timescales as follows:

2.1a EFA:

- Annual End of Year accounts (up to 31 August 2016, completed and returned by ...)
- Mid Year Forecast (up to 31 March 2016, completed and returned by ...)
- Self Assessment – completed and returned November 2016
- Budget Forecast for any new schools transferring to the Trust after 1 April 2016
- Annual Budget Forecast for current schools (completed and returned by ...)

2.1b Trust Board:

- Quarterly Income and Expenditure Report for central accounts, including detailed expenditure and expenses reports
- Quarterly School Level Income and Expenditure Summary
- Provided to the Business Operations Committee December; March; June and September for recommendation to the full Trust Board,
- Individual School Budget Forecast recommended for approval from Local Governing Bodies (completed and returned by ...)

Audit support is currently provided through an approved contract with Allots Accountancy Service. Lead responsible officer for Allots is Steve Watson.

The Accounting Officer for Consilium Academies Central Provision is Martin Shevill.

The Interim Chief Finance Officer for Consilium Academies Central Provision is Sonia Johnson. These duties have been incorporated into the role of Director of Business and Operations. This will be reviewed following the incorporation of additional schools into the MAT (anticipated review date March 2016).

All financial transactions will be reported within the agreed systems. For central provision an interim basic income and expenditure system is in place pending transfer to a centrally agreed system which will operate central and school accountancy provision. This will be put into place following the transfer of the second school into the MAT (expected March 2016). School systems will continue to use their current accountancy systems prior to transfer to the central system. For Armthorpe Academy this will be FMS. The FMS system will record all financial transaction and will report in line with the agreed arrangements above.

2.2 Banking Arrangements

Will be managed by the Chief Finance Officer.

All banking activity will be agreed by the Board of Trustees who also operate in the role of Company Directors.

Payment of invoices will be made within 28 days or against the agreed contractual terms.

Where possible, payment will be made by BACs transfer. Where this is not possible, payment will be made by cheque.

Authorisation of all banking transaction will comply with agreed levels and all payments require 2 signatures.

Consilium Academies central account is currently operated through Barclays Business Accounts.

This account will be extended in order to manage EFA funding transfers to individual schools. Review of the current arrangements will commence in January 2016 with a view to new arrangements being in place which comply with the Master Funding Agreement following conversion of new academies into the Trust (expected March 2016).

2.3 Authorisation of Payment

All payments will be authorised by 2 signatories. Authorisation levels as follows:

CEO/Accounting Officer – payments up to £15,000.00

Director of Business & Operations/Chief Finance Officer – payments up to £10,000.00

Business & Operations Committee – payments up to £25,000.00

Trust Board – payments up to £35,000.00

Trust Board will authorise any individual payments or contract in excess of £35,000.00 following appropriate notification to the EFA.

Payment will be made through the Central Provision once the above authorisation is complete in line with the banking arrangements.

2.4 School Funding Agreements

Top Slice funding from school to trust central provision will be agreed at an individual school level in order to recognise the requirement of each school. The funding agreement will be a minimum of 3% and a maximum of 5%. Central Provision will manage and fund the Strategic HR; Transactional Payroll and Central Trust Legal Support contracts which will be funded by the top slice. The top slice will also fund central staffing requirements. Funding will be paid on a monthly basis. Additional school improvement support will be funded by the individual school. For further information see the School Funding Agreement.

The operation of the school funding agreements will be reviewed following the conversion of additional schools in order to comply with the Master Funding Agreement. The current MFA allows EFA to transfer funding directly to Armthorpe Academy, who then provide a monthly payment to Consilium Academies. This may be reviewed to allow the EFA to transfer funding for all academies in the MAT directly to Consilium Academies central provision for distribution to individual schools. The top slice will be recovered at source if this change is implemented following the conversion of the second school. The school funding agreement will however remain in place in order to provide a clear overview of the activity funded by each individual school funding agreement. The expected review date is March 2016.

2.5 Other Funding

All other funding streams will be managed by Consilium Academies central provision. This includes grants paid directly to Consilium Academies as well as those applied for to support individual school operations such as Condition Improvement Funding.

2.6 Investment

A policy on investment will be developed based on current school processes and EFA requirements. The initial focus will be on banking arrangements in order to make best use of income streams. As the trust develops this will be extended to include charitable donations and other income streams, use of high interest accounts and strategic investment which supports the trust to increase revenue streams.

Any individual school investments will be managed through their local governing body against the agreed procedure which must manage risk against investments made.

Review date August 2016.

2.7 Risk Management

All financial management processes will include a risk register which measures accountability, responsibility, system management and fraud and applies appropriate contingency arrangements which mitigate the potential risk identified.

A central register will be managed by Consilium Academies which will be supported by individual school registers.

3. Human Resources

3.1 HR Strategy

The HR strategy for Consilium Academies will be developed as part of the Business Plan and will include an annual review of the following areas:

- Central Staffing, including finance and resources to support the staffing structure
- School Staffing, including finance and resources to support the staffing structure in individual schools and shared across hubs of schools
- Accountability and responsibility of the CEO and Director of Business & Operations
- Performance Management (central team and individual school headteachers)
- Delegated responsibilities of individual school local governing bodies

Central Team

The CEO will lead the strategic HR requirements for Consilium Academies.

The staffing structure will be reviewed and agreed with the Business and Operations Committee on a termly basis in order to allow flexibility and growth which supports the growing needs of the MAT. Recommendations will be made to the Full Trust Board for final approval.

The CEO will report the following to the committee on a quarterly basis:

- Any disciplinary issues/action
- Any capability issues/action
- Any absence management issues/action

The CEO will take any appropriate action in these areas up to and including written warning.

Any action leading to or likely to lead to Final Written Warning or Dismissal should be referred to the Chair of the Business and Operations Committee in the first instance.

The relevant policy should then be followed in order to make sure appropriate investigation takes place and a panel to hear the issue and provide the warning/dismissal be appointed.

The Full Trust board will be kept informed appropriately, taking consideration of data protection issues, and will be involved in dismissal and dismissal appeals hearing as appropriate and in line with the agreed policy.

Staffing appointments will be managed by the CEO, working in partnership with the Business & Operations Committee as appropriate to the role. The Trust Board will be responsible for authorising the final appointment prior to recruitment to the central team.

Appropriate recruitment methods will be used in order to make sure that a fair, open and consistent process is in place and that where possible support from individual schools is utilised, this includes consideration of whether central tasks and activities could be managed by one of the academies in the trust, on behalf of the whole trust, better. Therefore putting workforce planning at the heart of all staffing requirements.

Staff employed directly by the Central Team will be expected to support all schools within the Trust and will therefore, need to travel to each academy linked to the MAT. This requirement will be recognised within the recruitment process.

Individual Schools

The school's Local Governing Body is responsible for making sure the policies and procedures are operated appropriately in their school setting.

Working in partnership with the LGB and the senior leadership of the school, the Headteacher is responsible for policy implementation and operational practice. The central team will provide advice and support.

All issues will be reported to the central team. This includes:

- Any disciplinary action
- Any capability action
- Absence management reports on a quarterly basis and any linked action taken as a result of issues arising from absence.

Reports of minor issues (up to written warnings) will be provided on a quarterly basis.

Significant issues (where there is potential for final written warning or there is a staff child protection/safeguarding issue) must be reported immediately so action being taken can be reviewed and, if appropriate, escalated without delay.

The school will continue to follow the appropriate procedure up to and including dismissal (if this is the appropriate action) but this must be reported to and authorised by the central team.

The Trust Board will be informed as appropriate to data protection requirements and will only be involved in serious issues requiring Trust Board representation (such as, but not exclusive to, appeal hearings).

The Headteacher will be responsible for managing the school staffing structure, working closely with the LGB who should authorise all new appointments, changes to contracts and workforce planning requirements. Both the school and the LGB should always consider workforce planning principles, making sure that the role, responsibilities and salary is commensurate to the requirements of the school.

Consilium Academies Central Team will provide advice and support as appropriate to the needs of each individual school. Formal involvement in the decision making process will take place in the following circumstances:

- Where the school is in a deficit budget situation (either current or forecast)
- Where there are redundancy possibilities
- Where there have been concerns raised about the leadership of the school

General – additional strategic HR support will be provided through the appointed external contract with Schofield Sweeney – Just Teach. All schools will be provided with a copy of the contract provision, which includes advice, guidance and training options.

3.2 HR Policy

A systematic review of policies and procedures will be managed over the next 12 months in order to meet the requirements of the Trust.

The following procedures have been adopted by the Trust and published on their website in line with MAT requirements:

- Whistle Blowing Procedure
- Data Protection Procedure

Individual schools have up to date procedures in place which have been adopted by their local governing bodies. These will be retained until reviewed within the cycle outlined above. Re-adoption by the LGB will be required as each procedure is updated.

School LGB's will be responsible for making sure that the policies and procedures are followed in an appropriate and timely manner. The Headteacher, supported by the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for implementation and communication to all staff.

3.3 General Personnel Support

Additional in house activity through Just Teach requires an additional contract which needs to be funded separately. Any work of this nature must therefore be agreed with the central team prior to the commission being agreed and will only be provided in exceptional circumstances.

Internal support options will need to have been exhausted and schools should use their own staff to manage day to day HR and personnel provision wherever possible.

Consilium Academies will endeavour to make sure that appropriate staff are trained to support day to day personnel activity and where this isn't possible, will look to access support from elsewhere when appropriate and needed.

A review of training and guidance for Line Managers will also be undertaken to make sure they are in a position of being able to manage most day to day personnel issues directly with the staff they manage.

This activity will be developed and implemented over the next 12 months.

3.4 Contract Management/External Support Provision

Any staffing or staffing resource brought in from an external source must be managed through the contract management framework (with the exception of supply teachers to cover absent staff which should be managed through a supply agency contract).

The contract management framework includes an approval process which makes sure that resource used complies with commercial and education legislation.

Support and advice will be provided to individual schools through the central team as this process is developed.

Further details and management of contracts/consultants will be detailed in the school funding agreements and individual contract service schedules.

4. Facilities and Resources

4.1 Premises

Consilium central staff are currently operating as a virtual office. This allows them to work from either individual school settings or from home. Future working arrangements will depend on where the academy hubs are located and it is expected that rather than have a central office, a working space will be created within each hub.

This will be located in a dedicated school, agreed with the hub. For example, Armthorpe Academy have provided a dedicated office for Consilium Central staff within the Leadership & Admin block, which has wifi access and office resources (desks/chairs) as well as providing a generous meeting space. It is likely this kind of arrangement will be facilitated in other academy hubs as schools join the trust and that the central team will base themselves in the hubs most appropriate to their home but with the expectation they will need to, on occasion, travel to other academies and hubs within the trust.

4.2 IT infrastructure

This will need to be considered in detail once new schools join the MAT.

Most schools now tend to operate their own server system, however, Consilium Academies will need to ensure that whatever system is in place, it has the ability to link to other school systems and manage any software systems consistently across Trust academies.

4.3 Data Systems

This will need to be considered in detail once new schools join the MAT.

Data systems in operation will need to be consistent in order to make sure that reporting against pupil performance is robust, up to date and tailored to the needs of the Trust as well as meeting national requirements.

Most schools Consilium Academies are in discussion with currently operate the SIRIUS system, as do Armthorpe Academy. However, it is possible that schools joining the MAT later will operate a different system. A decision will need to be made on the preferred system before April 2016 and this will then need to become a clear requirement for new schools joining the MAT.

4.4 Finance Systems

This will need to be considered in detail once new schools join the MAT.

There is a combination of systems available and it appears this is not a consistent picture. Systems outlined to date include:

- The Financial Management System for schools (FMS). Which can include an additional package to support academies but was originally set up as a local authority led system.
- HCSS. Which does include academy reporting provision and also extends into policy support areas.
- PS Financials. Which does include academy reporting provision and has extensive options available for use.

A decision on the preferred Finance System to be implemented across all academies in the MAT will need to be made before the next school joins Consilium Academies (expected April 2016).

Whichever systems are in place, the requirement for individual schools in terms of authorisation of Finance will be outlined separately in order to meet delegated responsibility requirements. See addendum specific to each school.

4.5 Social Media

Consilium Academies manages a central website directly – www.consilium-at.com

This provides information on the MAT as well as providing an ability to publish external data as required by EFA and DfE.

The website also provides links to individual school websites.

Each school within the trust will be expected to develop and manage their own website facility in order to make sure that it continues to provide a resource which meets the needs of the individual school's pupils, parents and local community.

In addition, Consilium Academies and each individual school will manage and operate Facebook and Twitter and other social media outlets.

A review of Social Media will take place as new schools join the MAT in order to make sure all schools and the central team are up to date in terms of social media requirements, data protection principles and responsibilities, pupil access to the internet, community facilities and any other relevant legislation. This will focus on providing a safe working and learning environment in each school and will be completed by Autumn 2016.

4.6 Standardisation

Although every effort will be made to maintain a local focus for the schools in Consilium Academies, there will inevitably be some areas where a more standard approach is required. This is more likely in operational area but may extend to other areas in the future if deemed appropriate by each school hub. The focus will remain on making sure all schools in the MAT operate efficiently and effectively, considering quality as well as (and as part of) value for money approaches. This includes sharing resources where appropriate.

A network/working group will be established which requires attendance from each school's business lead. This group will, in the first instance, consider each of the review areas outlined

in this document and provide clear recommendations to the Trust Board and to each Local Governing Body prior to any formal decision being made.

They will then be responsible for implementation, including staff communication, within their school.

The working group will be led by the Director of Business & Operations from Consilium's central team but it expected that over time, responsibilities for key areas will be devolved to school level where possible and appropriate and where the school shows a particular strength. Consilium Central Team will however retain accountability.

Document Author: Sonia Johnson (interim Director of Business & Operations)

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