

Public Document Pack



Schools Forum

Thursday, 18 June 2020 4.00 p.m.
Via remote access

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R', is positioned above a grey rectangular stamp.

Chief Executive

*Please contact Ann Jones - Tel: 0151 511 8276 or email:
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The next meeting of the Committee is on Wednesday, 14 October 2020*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

SCHOOLS FORUM

At a meeting of the Schools Forum on Wednesday, 26 February 2020 at Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: K. Landrum (Chair), Primary School with a Nursery Representative
 A. Jones, Democratic Services, HBC
 A. McIntyre, Education, Inclusion & Provision, HBC
 A. Jones, Financial Management, HBC
 N Shafiq, Financial Management, HBC
 R. Springs, Financial Management, HBC
 A. Brown, Nursery Schools Representative
 J. O'Connor, PVI Representative
 N. Hunt, Pupil Referral Unit Representative
 J. Wilson, Secondary Governor Representative
 A. Sheppard, VA Schools Representative
 J. McConville, Secondary Academy Representative
 I. Critchley, All Through Schools Representative

Action

SCF24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Thalia Bell, Kathryn Albiston, Jackie Coughlan, Lyn Roberts and Heather Austin.

SCF25 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

SCF26 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) FORECAST OUTTURN 2019-20

The Forum received the DSG forecast outturn for 2019-20 as at 11 February 2020.

Members were referred to the detailed breakdown for all four blocks attached at Appendix A: Schools Block; Central School Services Block; Early Years Block; and High Needs Block and the report provided commentary on the calculation of each.

It was reported that a forecast outturn of £338,824 under budget for 2019-20 was expected after building in all known and expected costs. This equated to 0.30% of the overall DSG allocation to Halton.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SCF27 EARLY YEARS BLOCK FUNDING FOR 2020-21

The Forum received the current position on Early Years funding for 2020-21.

It was reported that an initial allocation of £9,981,564 for the provision of Early Years support had been received. The January 2020 headcount had been used to calculate indicative budgets for providers which were tabled at the meeting and explained in the report.

The reasoning behind the ring-fencing of the underspend from this year's early years budget being transferred into next year's budget was noted.

Members also received the proposals for the Centrally Retained budgets, presented with a comparison to 2019-20 and were asked to approve these.

One Member requested to know what the pupil projections were for the next couple of years. This information was available and would be sent following the meeting.

On behalf of the Schools Forum, the Chair passed on their thanks to the Financial Management Team for their hard work and support.

RESOLVED: That the Forum

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) agree the centrally retained budgets as proposed.

Operational
Director -
Education,
Inclusion and
Provision

SCF28 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK FUNDING FOR 2020-21

The Forum received the High Needs Block funding for 2020-21 and was requested to agree the Centrally Retained budgets.

It was reported that the Dedicated Schools Grant settlement was a total of £19,063,244 for 2020-21 which was an increase of £2,292,555 from the previous year. However from this figure, £2,906,662 was being recouped by the ESFA for commissioned places in special academies and some independent special schools. This left £16,156,582 High Needs Block that would be paid to Halton Borough Council.

Officers tabled the Special Unit Calculations for 2020-

21 and the Special Schools and PRU top-up rates for 2020-21. The report provided commentary on the current position, Resource Base funding, Special Schools, the PRU, Top-up funding and the Centrally Retained budgets. The Centrally Retained budgets were agreed by the Forum.

One Member requested information on the High Needs contingency, these would be sent after the meeting.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) agrees the Centrally Retained budgets.

Financial
Management,
HBC

SCF29 CENTRAL SCHOOLS SERVICES BLOCK (CSSB)
FUNDING FOR 2020-21

The Forum received the Central School Services Block (CSSB) funding for 2020-21.

It was noted that the CSSB was now a separate block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. For 2020-21 the grant allocation was £665,440 and approval was requested from Schools Forum for the budgets funded from this block.

The budgets were presented in the report with explanations and shown against the comparisons to 2019-20. The Forum discussed the budgets and the contribution to the Safeguarding post was highlighted. It was agreed that Nigel Hunt (PRU) would contact the secondary headteachers to seek their views on the future funding of this role, as the funding was reducing year on year. Officers would contact the primaries in this regard.

The Forum agreed the following centrally retained budgets from the CSSB as follows:

	<u>2020-21</u>
Contribution to Safeguarding post	£37,680
Teacher's Panel	£19,460
Licences	£104,480
Premature Retirements	£100,000

The former Education Services Grant retained element funding now part of the CSSB allocation was agreed as follows:

Staffing	£192,800
Central Recharges	£109,860

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) agrees the CSSB budgets.

Operational
Director -
Education,
Inclusion and
Provision

SCF30 HIGH NEEDS - PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT

The Forum received a report which set out the proposed changes to the operating model of the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and sought the Forum's support for the revised funding arrangements.

The Forum recognised that in recent years the high levels of secondary exclusions had been restricting the ability of the PRU to provide preventative placements and use their expertise to provide outreach support to schools. The PRU had also seen an increasing number of pupils requiring assessment for an EHCP and very few students on engagement placements successfully returned to their mainstream schools.

It was reported that this was identified as a key priority in the High Needs Review and one of the recommendations was to change the operating model of PRU and its relationships to schools, so that it could maximise the integration of pupils back into mainstream schools. A Task and Finish Group, facilitated by *Peopletoo* and with stakeholder representatives, had now developed a plan which would allow the PRU to work differently with schools.

This new approach and new arrangements were discussed in the report as well as the revised instrument of governance. The proposals for the allocation of two inclusion places per term for up to 12 weeks for each secondary school funded from the High Needs Budget was welcomed, and it was noted that these places would be contingent on the schools' commitment to reintegrate these students back into their mainstream secondary school.

The proposals for the Outreach Service (led by the PRU) and funding arrangements from the High Needs budget were presented to Members; this was discussed and supported.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) supports the proposed changes to the operating

model of the PRU and the funding from the High Needs budget of two inclusion places per school per annum; and

- 2) supports the contribution from the High Needs budget of £100,000 for the provision of a PRU Outreach Service.

Meeting ended at 5.07 p.m.

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 18th June 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director - Finance

SUBJECT: Update from North West LMS meeting

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To report to the Schools Forum key issues discussed at the recent regional meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 The report is noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 NW LMS Group

The NW LMS group is made up of representatives from each local authority in the North West region, specifically those dealing with school funding/Dedicated Schools Grant. At some meetings we have representatives from the Department for Education and/or the Education Skills Funding Agency.

3.2 Virtual meeting held on 12th May 2020

A virtual meeting took place with just one representative from most LAs plus a representative from the ESFA.

The ESFA are committed to moving towards a “hard” National Funding Formula but this will not be in place for 2021-22. We will continue with the “soft” formula as currently in place. The guidance for 2021-22 is due to be released in early July.

Teachers Pay Grant and Teachers Pension Grant will be rolled into the DSG from 2021-22 onwards. For mainstream primary and secondary schools the grants are already paid on a per pupil basis so will be added to the Basic Entitlement factor. There will be a blanket exclusion from the Minimum Funding Guarantee to ensure this change will not have an adverse impact on an individual school’s budget. The Minimum Funding Level will also be increased to take account of these additions. For the PRU and Special schools, maintained nursery schools and centrally employed teachers, the additional funds will be calculated and added to the relevant DSG blocks.

The regulations are being changed to allow for virtual Schools Forum meetings, to be laid before Parliament at the end of May. The amended regulations came into effect on 18th June.

The DSG outturn for 2019-20 reporting requirements have changed. Local authorities with a deficit balance will have to submit a recovery plan to the ESFA in the same way as last year, but local authorities whose surplus balance has significantly reduced will now also be required to submit a recovery plan. It is uncertain as yet if Halton will be required to do so.

The ESFA hope to issue an update in late July on the £13bn/3year increase in funding and how it is being split across the DSG blocks.

The maintained nursery schools protection funding is under review and the outcome will hopefully be included in the July guidance.

3.3 Covid-19

Several themes were discussed regarding the impact of the pandemic. Loss of income – issues regarding balancing school budgets was identified as being a key regional issue. The DfE have set up a financial support package for schools for which further guidance will be issued when the system goes live.

A series of questions were put to the ESFA representative to follow up, questions and answers as below:

Q. Can local authorities still charge Service Level Agreement costs to schools/academies for buy back services?

A. Whilst schools are receiving the same income if they had signed up to SLAs they should be honoured, SLAs would normally correspond to public funded salaries and these are not expected to be furloughed.

Q. Clarity is required on the Early Years census and how the funding will follow.

A. As you'll be aware our Early Years funding to LAs is based on the January (spring) census count, therefore summer term numbers should not affect our funding to the LA. We are still planning to update LA's 2020-21 funding allocation with the updated census figures from the January 2020 census as normal practice, but we're still wanting to be cautious in case the January 2020 figures creates any big drops in funding allocations for any LAs (more variance than we would normally expect to see with the usual annual updates). So we're still waiting to see the impact of the January 2020 census figures before we can confirm, but we're not really expecting to see any issues with the Jan 2020 figures as the census was taken before COVID-19 impact.

Therefore, in our guidance we've said we 'expect' to update the EY allocations – this is the current wording in our guidance:

“We will continue to pay local authorities their early years DSG as normal. It is expected that the initial early years dedicated schools grant (DSG) allocations for 2020 to 2021, announced in December 2019, will be updated to provisional allocations in July 2020 in the usual way (that is, using the January 2020 early years census and schools census.”

Although we think the January 2021 census is likely to be the bigger issue if the impact of COVID-19 is still seen by the time the January 2021 count is taken. So we are looking into that and will keep under review.

Q. Clarity on the additional costs for schools who must run classroom lessons and virtual lessons. This will incur a cost for some schools – are they expected to manage? The guidance says speak to your LA.

A. The school will need to manage under their current staffing arrangements. Guidance has been provided outlining flexibility of staffing requirements so that support staff can cover where lessons are being taught over multiple classrooms/ virtually.

The 'get in touch with your LA' was intended to be more around facilitating space solutions rather than funding. So for example if you had an infant school next to a junior school, the LA may ask if the Year 1 pupils to be taught in the junior school to allow them to use more classes for the younger age group in the infants. Please come back to us if you think that there is likely to be more costs involved that we have not considered.

Schools will continue to receive their budgets for the coming year, as usual, regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure. That will ensure that they are able to continue to pay their staff, and meet their other regular financial commitments, as we move through these extraordinary times.

The exceptional costs fund for schools does not cover remote learning devices for staff or pupils. All schools and local authority children's social care services, including those that have bought additional devices already, can benefit from the devices scheme.

Q. Clarity on furloughing staff for after/before school clubs. Some of these staff are paid entirely by contributions from parents and the rules are unclear on if they are able to be furloughed. Coupled with guidance from HMRC it's unclear the rules around this, including staff on second and third contracts.

A. We do not, in general, expect schools to furlough staff. However, we understand that, in some instances, schools may have a separate private income stream (for example, catering, sports facilities lettings, or boarding provision funded by parents in state boarding schools). Where this income has either stopped or been reduced and there are staff that are typically paid from those private income streams, it may be appropriate to furlough staff.

Schools should first seek to make the necessary savings from their existing budget or consider options to redeploy these staff before furloughing them. Only after all other potential options have been fully considered should schools furlough those members of staff and seek support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Further information is available in the coronavirus (COVID-19): financial support for education, early years and children's social care guidance on gov.uk in the 'State-funded schools' section.

HMRC updated the guidance Coronavirus job retention scheme on 14 May. This provides greater clarity on the rules around engaging staff who have been furloughed. The guidance is available [here](#).

Q. Voucher scheme – Clarity around the recovery of costs for Free School Meal vouchers outside of the Edenred scheme. LA's using other schemes have had confirmation that costs can be reclaimed through the [exceptional costs associated with coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#). However, the email made specific reference to the claim upper limits in the guidance and the fact that schools cannot claim if they expect to add to their reserves in 2020/21. This seems to disadvantage schools who have gone with their own scheme rather than Edenred as with Edenred **all** costs are fully funded. Also clarification about whether the LA will submit the claim or each individual school would also be helpful.

A. With the exceptional costs fund, we have confirmed in our guidance that schools are able to claim for additional costs incurred in supporting free school meal pupils where the national voucher scheme is not an appropriate approach.

We have always been clear that schools are free to consider what is the best solution for providing support to their free school meal pupils during the current circumstances and that this is subject to certain criteria, including a ceiling on the overall total cost that can be claimed and an expectation that schools would not claim if they will add further to any historic reserves.

We know that some schools will have continued to provide food parcels and/or prepared meals, many have used the national voucher scheme, and others will have used alternative voucher schemes locally. We would like to reassure you that these conditions do not prevent schools

from working with the others suppliers, or for being fully reimbursed where this will have a negative impact on their financial position.

Q: A colleague from the group has interpreted the exceptional costs guidance as follows:

“Where the guidance talks about surplus balances, adding to reserves etc., I’ve always taken that to mean that reserves should not grow as a direct result of any claim, either from the Job Retention Scheme or the other pot. So the claim itself should not create a surplus. Essentially, schools shouldn’t be seeking to profit from the support being offered. As long as claims don’t exceed the cost pressures caused by the Coronavirus then I think they are valid.”

Can you agree that this approach is acceptable?

A: Apologies for the delay, we are having to pass everything through policy at the moment. Your colleague has interpreted the policy in exactly the right way. The approach that you set out is what we would expect.

- 3.4 A further meeting is being set up for July to take place after the 2021-22 guidance is issued.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 DSG budgets for 2021-22 will be based on the guidance issued in July. Further guidance will be issued when the financial support package for schools which should reimburse the additional costs incurred due to Covid-19. As yet, it is thought this will not cover loss of income which will result in additional financial pressures for some schools.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children & Young People in Halton

It is essential that schools and education support services receive sufficient funding to allow them to support all children and young people.

5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 There is a clear risk that schools will not be able to recover all of the additional costs/loss of income incurred due to Covid-19 which will increase financial pressures.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 The Local Authority must discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to all schools and settings.

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 18th June 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director - Finance

SUBJECT: DSG Outturn for 2019-20

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To report to the Schools Forum the Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn for 2019-20.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 The balance of DSG from 2019-20 of £136,464 is carried forward into the 2020-21 financial year to be noted by Schools Forum.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Grant settlement

The final amount of DSG allocated to Halton for 2019-20 was £114,320,639 split as follows:

Schools Block	£86,931,157
High Needs Block	£16,770,689
Early Years Block	£9,951,247
Central School Services Block	£667,546

We are anticipating a recovery of £46,136 in relation to the Early Years Block due to a small reduction in numbers in the January 2020 headcount.

3.2 DSG Expenditure

Schools Block:

Mainstream primary and secondary schools	£86,061,846
Transfer to High Needs Block	£869,311

High Needs Block:

Recoupment for HN places	£2,958,833
Special schools, PRU, Resource bases	£8,380,455
Top-up funding	£1,051,826
Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schls	£3,063,211
Inter- Authority Recoupment	£345,929
Central Services	£2,363,193
HN overspend	£420,501

We have split the top-up funding estimate for the special schools/academies, resource bases and PRU from the top-up figure for the outturn, although these figures were all included in the Top-up forecast in the February report.

The INMSS costs are £39.6k higher than forecast as additional placements were made in February and March that were not included in the February report. However, the Inter-Authority costs are £28k lower than forecast as some charges have come in lower than expected.

The specialist provision has come in under budget by £84k which is slightly down on the £92k forecast. There was an increase in demand for Home Tuition towards the end of the financial year.

Post 16 HN provision has come in £150.6k under budget which is considerably higher than the forecast of £35.1k. There are still a few placements that started during 2019-20 where funding agreements have yet to be settled as well as a couple of placements where funding has been disputed, settled on our part and we are waiting for the final agreement and invoice from the providers. These costs have not been included in the outturn due to the uncertainty.

We also had Post 16 HN creditor reserves from 2018-19 coming into 2019-20 to offset invoices due. It appears that invoices for around £30k of these reserves have not been received therefore the reserve has effectively reduced the level of expenditure by around £30k. There are slightly fewer numbers of students in placements and there has also been a slight reduction in the number of the more expensive placements. However, it should be remembered that the financial outturn for 2019-20 includes one term from the 2018-19 academic year and two terms from the 2019-20 academic year.

Inclusion Division staffing has also come in under budget by £164.6k which is more than double the forecast of £81.5k. Staff vacancies forecast to be filled were not filled by year-end and on-costs have come in lower than expected.

Early Years Block:

Free entitlement for 3&4 year old	£7,674,124
Free entitlement for 2 year old	£1,453,509
Central Services	£418,171
Reserve for expected recovery of grant	£46,136
EY underspend	£359,307

The forecast outturn for the EY block reported in February was £351,256 which is only £8k different to the outturn. The Free entitlement provision for 3 & 4 year olds came in £72k under budget while the provision for 2 year olds came in £32.5k over budget.

Central services were under budget by £51k and we had a year-end contingency balance of £228.5k.

Central School Services Block:

Premature Retirement Costs	£495,305
Licences	£102,360
Dismissal Costs/Staff responsibilities	£207,629
Schools Contingency	£324,941
Contribution to staffing	£353,510
Recharges	£107,710
CSSB income	(£774,004)
CSSB overspend	£149,905

The main budget pressures on the CSSB has been on the School Contingency code and the Staff responsibilities code. The School Contingency code had expenditure of £325k against a budget of £199k. Four schools were successful in requesting additional funding through Schools Forum Sub Group although the funding for two schools has been carried forward to be devolved in 2020-21. These schools shared total funding of £157,849 leaving a balance of £40,931. There were two further charges to this budget of £93,333 replacement grant funding for Ashley Special School and £73,759 for NNDR adjustments at year end for maintained mainstream primary and secondary schools.

The Staff Responsibilities code covered agreed suspension costs.

A detailed breakdown of the outturn is attached at Appendix A.

3.3 Outturn position

The DSG allocation for the year, excluding any carry forward, was £114,320,639 while the total spend was £114,531,738 meaning we had an in-year overspend of £211,099. The carry forward balance has therefore been reduced from £347,563 to £136,464, which equates to 60.7% reduction.

3.4 Outturn reporting

Due to the pandemic the Department for Education have reviewed the returns they receive. At the time of writing this report, the requirement to submit the Section 251 Outturn report for 2019-20 is still to be decided as is the requirement to submit the Consistent Financial Reporting

3.5 DSG Balances

The DfE brought in a new requirement for Local Authorities to produce a recovery plan where the DSG balance is in deficit. For the financial year 2019-20 the conditions of grant have been changed and we have been told that a recovery plan will be required where an LA is in a deficit position or has seen a significant reduction in the surplus

balance. Our year-end balance has reduced by more than 60%. The DfE have stated that they wish to support LAs rather than challenge.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Council is required to ensure that DSG funding is allocated in accordance with the regulations attached to each block of DSG. The balance of unspent DSG as at 31st March 2020 will contribute towards budget pressures in 2020-21.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children & Young People in Halton

It is essential that schools and education support services receive sufficient funding to allow them to support all children and young people.

5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The Council will continue to closely monitor the level of DSG spend throughout the year to mitigate against the risk of overspend against available funding.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 The Local Authority must discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to all schools and settings.

DSG Forecast Outturn for 2019-20

£ 111,091,966 -£ 720,349 -£ 372,786

Summary

	Original budget	Current budget	Actual Outturn	Variance
Schools Block	£ 86,061,846	£ 86,061,846	£ 86,061,846	-£ 0
Central Schools Services Block	£ 667,546	£ 667,546	£ 817,451	-£ 149,905
Early Years Block	£ 9,631,209	£ 9,951,247	£ 9,591,940	£ 359,307
High Needs Block	£ 14,836,285	£ 14,784,113	£ 15,204,614	-£ 420,501
DSG carry forward (central)	£ 347,563	£ 347,563	£ -	£ 347,563
Total DSG	£ 111,544,449	£ 111,812,315	£ 111,675,851	£ 136,464

0.12%

Schools Block

Primary (before de-delegation)	£ 44,705,521	£ 44,705,521	£ 44,705,521	£ 0
Secondary (before de-delegation)	£ 41,356,325	£ 41,356,325	£ 41,356,326	-£ 1
Total Schools Block	£ 86,061,846	£ 86,061,846	£ 86,061,846	-£ 0

Central Schools Services Block

Safeguarding post contribution	£ 47,100	£ 47,100	£ 34,908	£ 12,192
Licences	£ 102,360	£ 102,360	£ 102,360	£ -
Teachers Panel	£ 19,460	£ 19,460	£ -	£ 19,460
Premature Retirement costs	£ 100,000	£ 501,930	£ 495,305	£ 6,625
Transfer to High Needs Block	£ 102,946	£ 102,946	£ -	£ 102,946
Staff Responsibilities (de-del)	£ 25,470	£ 25,470	£ 102,325	-£ 76,855
FSM Eligibility contribution (de-del)	£ 6,520	£ 6,520	£ 6,520	£ -
Dismissals Costs (de-del)	£ 127,110	£ 127,110	£ 105,304	£ 21,806
Schools Contingency (de-del)	£ 198,780	£ 198,780	£ 324,941	-£ 126,161
De-delegated income	-£ 357,880	-£ 357,880	-£ 357,880	£ -
Exclusions income	£ -	-£ 149,040	-£ 29,714	-£ 119,326
Inter Authority income	£ -	-£ 252,890	-£ 258,850	£ 5,960

Former ESG Retained Duties

Revenue budget preparation/Formulation and review of LA schools funding formula	£ 80,660	£ 80,660	£ 80,660	£ -
Director of children's services/Planning for the education service as a whole	£ 88,360	£ 88,360	£ 87,117	£ 1,243
Admissions service contribution	£ 8,430	£ 8,430	£ 8,430	£ -
SACRE	£ 2,910	£ 2,910	£ 2,910	£ -
Investigation of Complaints contribution	£ 7,610	£ 7,610	£ 7,615	-£ 5
Administrative costs and overheads	£ 107,710	£ 107,710	£ 107,710	£ 0

Former ESG General Duties

Budgeting and accounting functions relating to m:	£ 21,000	£ 21,000	£ 21,000	£ -
Asset Management contribution	£ 46,560	£ 46,560	£ 44,350	£ 2,210
Health & Safety contribution	£ 60,000	£ 60,000	£ 60,000	£ -
De-delegated income	-£ 127,560	-£ 127,560	-£ 127,560	£ -

Total Central Schools Services Block**£ 667,546 £ 667,546 £ 817,451 -£ 149,905**

Early Years Block

Nursery Schools	£ 1,007,757	£ 1,007,757	£ 988,245	£ 19,512
Nursery Units	£ 463,745	£ 463,745	£ 498,817	-£ 35,072
PVI - 3 & 4 yo provision	£ 6,274,521	£ 6,274,521	£ 6,187,062	£ 87,459
Early Years Pupil Premium/DAF	£ 188,690	£ 188,690	£ 148,424	£ 40,266
2 yo provision	£ 1,421,035	£ 1,421,040	£ 1,453,509	-£ 32,469
EYFS Business Rates	£ 24,210	£ 24,210	£ 23,288	£ 922
EY Inclusion Funding	£ 40,000	£ 40,000	£ 31,235	£ 8,765
Staffing - 2, 3 & 4 yo provision	£ 166,370	£ 166,370	£ 164,452	£ 1,918
Supplies & Services - 2, 3 & 4 yo provision	£ 40,240	£ 40,240	£ 772	£ 39,468
Contribution to IWIST	£ 50,000	£ 50,000	£ 50,000	£ -
EY contingency	-£ 45,359	£ 274,674	£ -	£ 274,674
Estimated final budget adjustment (Jul 20)	£ -	£ -	£ 46,136	-£ 46,136

Total Early Years Block	£	9,631,200	£	9,512,247	£	9,591,940	£	359,307
					-£	0		

High Needs Block

Special Schools & Academies	£	5,097,422	£	5,097,422	£	5,097,422	£	-
Resource Bases	£	1,378,478	£	1,378,478	£	1,378,478	£	-
PRU	£	1,500,000	£	1,904,955	£	1,904,955	£	-
Top-up funding	£	1,000,000	£	1,000,000	£	1,051,426	-£	51,426
Special Schools Equipment	£	20,000	£	20,000	£	7,392	£	12,608
Specialist Provision:								
Visually Impaired	£	113,930	£	113,930	£	60,535	£	53,395
Cognition & Learning	£	119,650	£	119,650	£	127,952	-£	8,302
Communication, Language & ASD	£	105,310	£	105,310	£	99,400	£	5,910
Hearing Impaired	£	195,970	£	195,970	£	225,174	-£	29,204
Home Tuition	£	286,340	£	286,340	£	201,456	£	84,884
Education Psychology Service	£	107,950	£	107,950	£	136,050	-£	28,100
Independent Special Schools	£	2,412,450	£	2,412,450	£	3,063,211	-£	650,761
Inter-Authority Recoupment	£	175,000	£	175,000	£	345,929	-£	170,929
Post 16 Provision	£	969,000	£	969,000	£	818,426	£	150,574
Behaviour Support Team	£	318,740	£	318,740	£	313,221	£	5,519
HN Contingency	£	497,815	£	40,688	£	-	£	40,688
Inclusion Division staffing	£	538,230	£	538,230	£	373,587	£	164,643
Total High Needs Block	£	14,836,285	£	14,784,113	£	15,204,614	-£	420,501

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 18 June 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision

SUBJECT: High Needs Summary 2020-2021

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide the Forum with a summary of the commitments to the High Needs budget for 2020-2021

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 Note the High Needs allocation for 2020-2021;

2.2 Support the budget allocation for 2020-2021; and

2.3 Request an update on High Needs expenditure at each School Forum meeting.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The total High Needs allocation for Halton is £19,063,244. This is sum allocated to the local authority to support pupils and students aged 0 to 24 with high needs. The funding available covers the following:

- Maintained mainstream school (pre-16 places in special units and resourced provision and post-16 high needs places)
- Maintained special schools
- Pupil referral units
- Mainstream academies and free schools (pre-16 in special units and resource provision and post-16 high needs places)
- Special academies (pre-16 and post-16)
- Special free schools (pre-16 and post-16 places)
- Alternative provision academies
- Further education institutions and independent learning providers (post-16 places only)

- AP free schools (pre-16 places, excluding those at schools opened during 2019 to 2020 or 2020 to 2021 academic years)
- Top-up funding for pupils and students in special post-16 institutions and non-maintained special schools
- All funding for children and young people placed in independent schools, independent AP (unless the places are commissioned directly by schools) and hospital education; and finally
- Funding for central high needs services and budgets.

3.2 The budget allocated to the local authority includes both import and export adjustments so that the funding reflects which local authority area pupils and students are educated.

3.3 Recoupment is also made by the EFSA for pupils and students in academies and free schools. In Halton this is a sum of £2,906,662 giving a net total budget of £16,156,582.

3.4 Detailed below in table 1 is the local authority allocation. Table 2 and Table 3 show the proposed allocation of this funding for 2020-2021.

Table 1

High Needs Block 2020-21				
				£
Grant allocation				19,063,244.00
Recoupment				- 2,906,662.00
HN Grant to HBC				16,156,582.00

Table 2

High Needs Block 2020-21				
				£
Special Schools				5,206,850.00
Resource Bases				1,186,633.00
PRU				1,500,000.00
Top-up funding				
	EHCP		1,020,000.00	
	Discretionary		80,000.00	
	Resource Bases		30,000.00	
	Special Schools/PRU		116,667	
	PRU Outreach		53,333	
				1,300,000.00
Staffing, incl SEND Commissioner				1,548,660.00
SEMH Team				334,660.00
Supplies & Services				102,820.00
Independent Special Schools				2,412,450.00
Inter Authority Recoupment				175,000.00
Post 16 Provision				969,000.00
Specialist Equipment				20,000.00
HN Contingency				1,400,509.00
	Total HN allocated			16,156,582.00

Table 3

£	Narrative
£ 760,000.00	For expected overspend on Independent and Non-Maintained Special School placements
£ 200,000.00	For expected overspend on other LA maintained schools top-up funding etc.
£ 200,000.00	For expected overspend on top-up funding, including special schools, resource bases (following review)
£ 102,000.00	For Ashley satellite school, 7/12ths from September 2020 for 7 pupils
£ 78,000.00	For extra Brookfields satellite school, 7/12ths from September 2020 for 7 pupils
£ 60,509.00	To support the processing and improvements to EHCPs
£ 1,400,509.00	Total High Needs Contingency as presented to Schools Forum

- 3.5 Table 3 sets out the proposed use of the contingency for 2020-2021 and shows a significant sum allocated for independent provision, funding for the expansion and continuation of satellite provision at Brookfields and the establishment of satellite provision for Ashley. Finally, an allocation has been set aside to support the changes required to restructure the support provided for Education, Health and Care Plans.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Through supporting schools to become more inclusive, streamlining the assessment arrangements and revising the offer of our specialist provision, including the PRU, it is hoped that we will be better able to meet the needs of Halton pupils through our local provision. Improving the EHCP process and providing more support from specialist settings should ensure more children and young people can be educated the borough, improving outcomes and reducing costs.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 There is a lack of specialist provision within the Borough to meet the needs of children and young people with high needs. High numbers of

children are being educated in independent provision with many pupils having to travel outside the borough to access provision. This is not in their best interest and is not sustainable

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 Improving the EHCP process and providing the more specialist support as well as sharing the knowledge and expertise of specialist settings with mainstream schools should mean that we can improve the quality of SEND provision within the borough, the outcomes of children and young people with SEND and encourage all our schools to become more inclusive.

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 17th June 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director - Finance

SUBJECT: School Balances 2019-20

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report to the Schools Forum the level of funding brought forward from 2019-20 by Halton Maintained Schools.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 The report is noted.
- 2.2 That the Schools Forum decides if any schools are to provide further information regarding their high balance.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 While balances are still reported to the Schools Forum, no excess surplus balance limits are in place. However, the Schools Forum retains the right to require schools to provide further information as to how their balance will be spent should they so decide.
- 3.2 The Individual School Budget balances for Halton maintained schools at the end of 2019-20 is £4,592,253. This is an increase of £112,306 compared to the balances for 2018-19. However, it should be noted that not all schools ended the year with a surplus balance, 3 had a deficit balance and of the other 49 schools 19 had a lower surplus than last year. The PRU has a surplus balance which offsets the deficit balance of the PRU Astmoor Skill Centre.
- 3.3 For the maintained nursery schools, balances have increased by £44,239 to £165,258.
- 3.4 For maintained primary schools, balances have increased by £43,542 to £3,961,980.
- 3.5 For maintained secondary schools, balances have decreased by £3,278 to £181,658.
- 3.6 For maintained special schools, balances have increased by £27,803 to £283,357.

3.7 Appendix A shows the balances for each maintained school, along with their 2018-19 balance for comparison.

3.8 The balances of Devolved Formula Capital grant for maintained schools has decreased by £129,395 to £267,251.

3.9 Appendix B shows the balances for each maintained school, along with their 2018-19 balance for comparison.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 It is pleasing to note that overall school balances have increased. However, with 19 schools having to use part of last year's surplus to meet their spend during 2019-20 as well as 3 schools ending the year in a deficit position it has to be recognised that some schools are still facing financial difficulties.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children & Young People in Halton

It is essential that schools receive sufficient funding to allow them to support all children and young people.

5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 Schools continue to face increasing cost pressures although we are now seeing the full NFF funding coming through to Halton. While the Department for Education have set up a financial support package for schools to cover certain additional costs due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it does not cover loss of income. For some schools this is a considerable amount and will only serve to further increase budgetary pressures.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

Maintained School Balances 2019-20

Appendix A

	2019-20	2018-19
Nursery Schools		
5001 Ditton Nursery School	80,146	26,960
5002 Birchfield Nursery School	30,014	55,109
5003 Warrington Road Nursery School	55,098	38,950
Nursery Total	165,258	121,019
Primary Schools		
5100 St Mary's CE Primary	266,228	214,146
5101 St Edwards Catholic Primary	68,758	87,988
5102 Weston Point Community Primary	158,410	202,818
5105 Victoria Road Primary School	74,827	87,228
5106 Weston Primary School	80,146	138,307
5107 St Clements Catholic Primary School	45,009	62,421
5108 Westfield Primary School	36,040	10,753
5109 Halton Lodge Primary School	54,110	44,055
5110 Castle View Primary School	91,604	82,408
5111 Astmoor Primary School	32,894	27,839
5112 The Brow Community Primary	66,867	81,320
5113 Woodside Primary School	53,014	53,200
5114 The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary	(4,632)	27,397
5116 Pewithall Primary School	31,443	31,194
5118 Hallwood Park Primary School	12,275	41,800
5120 Runcorn All Saints Ce Primary	8,136	60,885
5121 Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary	172,101	152,922
5122 Hillview Primary School	60,755	68,809
5123 Beechwood Primary School	57,811	49,787
5125 Brookvale Primary School	325,148	276,201
5126 St Martins Cath Primary School	(9,099)	6,760
5127 Murdishaw West Comm Primary School	69,568	40,975
5128 Gorsewood Primary School	131,875	130,913
5129 St Berteline's CE Primary	68,081	46,917
5130 Windmill Hill Primary School	130,536	98,336
5132 Moore Primary School	60,286	64,180
5133 Hale CE Vol Contr Primary	19,295	31,511
5134 St Bedes Catholic Junior School	28,113	140,145
5135 St Bedes Catholic Infant School	164,500	140,949
5136 Spinney Avenue CE Primary	0	48,142
5137 St Michael's Catholic Primary School	130,514	98,448
5138 Farnworth CE Controlled Primary	49,422	48,339
5139 Halebank CE Voluntary Controlled Primary	164,767	147,403
5140 St Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery	174,487	188,984
5141 Ditton Primary School	0	40,846
5142 Simms Cross Primary School	95,512	214,921
5144 Oakfield Primary School	65,631	55,347
5146 Moorfield Primary School	18,336	13,038
5148 Our Lady Of Perpetual Succour Primary	113,207	81,988
5149 St Basils Catholic Primary	184,832	103,197
5150 All Saints Upton CE Voluntary Controlled Primary	14,831	40,802

5151 Fairfield Primary	278,808	132,237
5153 Lunts Heath Primary School	100,027	32,153
5154 St John Fisher Catholic Primary	217,507	170,429
Maintained Primary Total	3,961,980	3,918,438
Secondary Schools		
5301 St Chads Catholic High School	(114,239)	41,655
5312 St Peter & Paul Catholic High	278,663	141,383
5313 The Bridge School PRU	189,171	1,898
5315 The Bridge - Astmoor Skill Centre	(171,937)	0
Maintained Secondary Total	181,658	184,936
Special Schools		
5401 Ashley School	40,593	51,164
5402 Chesnut Lodge Special School	242,764	204,390
Maintained Special Total	283,357	255,554
Grand Total	4,592,253	4,479,947

Appendix B

Devolved Formula Capital Grant year end balances 2019-20

	2019-20	2018-19
Nursery Schools		
5591 Ditton Nursery Non LMS	9,009	12,158
5592 Birchfield Nursery Non LMS	3,777	8,605
5593 Warrington Road Non LMS	13,192	8,348
Maintained Nursery DFC Total	25,978	29,111
Primary Schools		
5502 Weston Point Non LMS	19,729	19,356
5505 Victoria Road Non LMS	6,189	24,832
5506 Weston Non LMS	3,716	9,751
5508 Westfield Non LMS	9,707	8,764
5509 Halton Lodge Non LMS	15,777	9,516
5510 Castle View Non LMS	13,561	19,658
5511 Astmoor Non LMS	5,701	0
5512 The Brow Non LMS	4,481	20,937
5513 Woodside Non LMS	8,044	8,901
5516 Pewithall Non LMS	5,500	2,685
5518 Hallwood Park Non LMS	14,775	12,258
5522 Hillview Non LMS	7,445	9,292
5523 Beechwood Non LMS	3,520	19,299
5525 Brookvale Primary Non LMS	6,079	22,627
5527 Murdishaw West Non LMS	210	9,188
5528 Murdishaw Gorsewood Non LMS	3,883	1,781
5530 Windmill Hill Non LMS	9,689	4,092
5532 Moore Non LMS	4,482	8,858
5533 Hale Non LMS	16,956	11,223
5536 Spinney Avenue CE Non LMS	0	99
5538 Farnworth Non LMS	19,455	23,257
5539 Halebank Non LMS	2,236	9,304
5541 Ditton Primary Non LMS	0	25,634
5542 Simms Cross Non LMS	15,116	11,635
5544 Oakfield Primary Non LMS	558	4,402
5546 Moorfield Non LMS	5,825	15,877
5550 All Saints Upton Non LMS	21,009	18,986
5551 Fairfield Junior Non LMS	8,127	2,963
5553 Lunts Heath Non LMS	0	13,340
Maintained Primary DFC Total	231,770	348,514
Secondary Schools		
5595 The Bridge School PRU Non-LMS	2,655	(2,560)
Special Schools		
5581 Ashley School Non LMS	(4,545)	3,315
5582 Chesnut Lodge Non LMS	11,393	18,266
Maintained Special DFC Total	6,848	21,580
Grand Total	267,251	396,646

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 18 June 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision

SUBJECT: Contingency/Staff Dismissals Update

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report on the total spend against the School Contingency and staff dismissal budget in 2020.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 School Forum note the spend against the school contingency and staff dismissals.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 3.1 The Schools Contingency is the sum delegated to those schools maintained by the Local Authority. Halton schools have agreed that this sum is delegated and managed centrally. This total budget for 2019/2020 is £198,780. This funding can only be used in the following circumstances:

- Exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet;
- Schools in financial difficulties; and
- Additional costs relating to new, reorganised or closing schools.

- 3.2 Applications can be considered by the School Forum under the following circumstances:

- Schools in financial difficulty, unable to access a licence deficit, applying for a deficit write off;
- Formula errors and other miscellaneous costs which schools could not be expected to fund from their own budget;
- Additional costs relating to new, re-organised or closing schools (this could include the costs of any salary protection);

- Emergencies and exceptional unforeseen costs which it would be unreasonable to expect governing bodies to meet;
- Schools in special measures or where there are serious weaknesses;
- Result of former poor leadership and management for a school which is now under new leadership; and
- Significant loss of goods or equipment.
- Schools in financial difficulty that wish to apply for a licenced deficit;*

3.3 Applications from schools in financial difficulties applying for a licenced deficit are considered by the Strategic Director People and the Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community and Resources.

3.4 The procedure for applying for additional funding from the contingency is as follows:

- Schools must put a formal request for support in writing to the Operational Director –Education, Inclusion and Provision.
- Schools must state clearly how they have met the eligibility criteria;
- Schools must provide clear details (and financial values) of the circumstances underlying the application, the amount of contingency they are applying for and the rationale for the amount requested;
- Applications can be made at any time during the year;
- Requests will be considered and determined by a sub group of the School Forum. School Forum Sub Committee will have at least 3 members but no more than 5. The outcome of any decision will be reported to the next School Forum;
- The Headteacher of the school applying for funding will be asked to attend School Forum to explain their application and answer any queries.
- Schools will be notified of the outcome of the School Forum decision within 5 working days of the meeting.

- 3.5 The following applications for funding received were approved against the 2019/2020 budget:

School	Funding
Simms Cross	£19,575
Astmoor Primary School	£27,274
Westfield Primary	£46,000
Hallwood Park	£65,000
Total	£157,849

- 3.6 This would have left a balance of £40,903, however, the DFE notified the LA that they would no longer be funding the replacement sixth form at Ashley a total of £93,333. Due to the lack of funding from High Needs this sum was taken from the school contingency. In addition, the review of rates for primary and secondary schools cost an additional £73,759. When these two costs are added to the remaining balance this gives an overspend of £126,161.
- 3.7 The budget for staff dismissals is £127,110. There has been one application for support, for £105,304 from Woodside Primary School. This request was considered and approved by the School Forum Sub Committee. The balance remaining is £21,806.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The funding agreed by School Forum Sub Committee ensured that each of the schools was able to balance their budget and restructure their staffing. The rates evaluation was only notified just before the end of the financial year and through the funding formula schools should be reimbursed the full costs of their rates. The decision was made by the DFE to cease the place funding for Ashley. This funding is vital for the sustainability of the school. Representation will be made about the costs for 2020/2021.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The contingency is used to provide financial support and stability to schools.

5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 Without financial assistance schools would either be unable to balance their budget or be forced to make additional staffing reductions which will directly impact on pupil outcomes.

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7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 Applications are welcome from any eligible school and each application is considered on its own merit.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 N/A