

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 21st January 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: Central DSG Budgets 2015-16

1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 **To report to the School Forum an update on the Centrally Held Dedicated Schools Grant Budgets for 2015-16.**

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

RECOMMENDED:

(1) The report be noted.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Background**

The DSG Budgets held centrally for 2015-16 are again being scrutinised. Centrally held budgets funded from the Schools Block of the DSG are very tightly restricted while the High Needs and Early Years elements are less so.

3.2 **Schools Block**

The central budgets funded from the Schools Block include contributions to Internal Audit, Safeguarding, Halton Safeguarding Board, Capital Expenditure from Revenue, English as an Additional Language and the contingencies. The total is still to be finalised and will be tabled at the meeting but it cannot be increased from the previous year.

3.3 **Early Years Block**

The centrally held budgets from the Early Years Block include the budget for Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector Early Years provision which we have increased by £100,000 of funding from the Primary budget plus a small budget for staff. Again the total is still to be finalised and will be tabled at the meeting.

3.4 **Two Year old funding**

No announcement has been made regarding funding for the provision of places for two year olds. This is not expected until July 2015.

3.5 **High Needs Block**

The High Needs block centrally held provision includes Independent Special Schools, Out of Borough top-up funding, in-borough top-up funding, Post 16 High Needs and funding for a number of posts within the Inclusion division. Once again, the total is being finalised and will be tabled at the meeting.

3.6 **Summary**

It is increasingly difficult to set the DSG budgets for both schools and the required central budgets and still balance to the funding given. This is due to the increase in pupil numbers and the net decrease in grant received. The High Needs and Early Years budgets (approximately £18.7m) are indicative allocations and will be adjusted in line with the January census. This census is also used to set the Early Years and High Needs budgets for schools so estimates have to be used when setting the Schools Block budgets to ensure we keep within the overall expected grant.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

5.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None