

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 16th June 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director - Finance

SUBJECT: DSG Management Plan

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on, and summarise, the requirement on the local authority, to produce and consult on a DSG Management Plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 School Forum members note the requirement for a DSG Management Plan and agree to hold an additional meeting to consider the completed template.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The DSG: conditions of grant 2020 to 2021 paragraph 5.2, requires that any LA with an overall deficit on its DSG account at the end of the 2019 to 2020 financial year, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must be able to present a plan to the Department for Education (DfE) for managing their future DSG spend.
- 3.2 The outturn position for Halton for 2020/2021 shows a deficit on the High Needs budget of £1,599,137. In-year DSG overspent by £1,132,206 and taking into consideration the carry forward balance of £136,464 from the previous financial year this has produced a total DSG deficit of £995,742 which has been carried forward into 2021-22.
- 3.3 As there is a requirement for LAs to share this information with local stakeholders including School Forum, parent and carer forum and local Headteacher groups, the DfE have produced guidance and management plan template. (Please see further guidance details in the appendix).
- 3.3 The focus of the management plan will be on the high needs provision and spend.
- 3.4 It is expected that the plan will be updated and presented to School Forum at each of its meeting. Work has commenced on completing the detailed template and School Forum are asked to approve a one item agenda special meeting to consider the plan. The Plan will also be shared with the other appropriate stakeholders.

3.5 As it is recognised that work on bringing spending in line with income and repaying deficits will take some time the document has been developed so that it is live and can be updated.

3.6 It is expected that management plans reflect the most current forecast DSG position and are published on the LA local offer website and are signed off by the Leads in Finance and Special Education Needs.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 To set out and share the plans to reduce the current High Needs deficit of £1,599,137.

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 reduce 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.