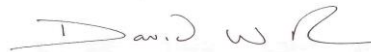




Schools Forum

**Wednesday, 21 March 2018 4.00 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn**

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:
ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Wednesday, 13 June 2018*

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

Part I

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7. MEETING DATES FOR 2018-19	
• 13 June 2018	
• 10 October 2018	
• 16 January 2019	
• 20 March 2019	

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, 17 January 2018 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillor T. McInerney, Observer
 J. Wilson, Secondary Governor Representative
 K. Landrum (Chair), Primary Representative (VA School)
 A. McIntyre, Education, Inclusion & Provision, HBC
 A. Jones, Financial Management, HBC
 A. Jones, Democratic Services, HBC
 N. Middlehurst, Financial Management, HBC
 M. Constantine, Special Schools Representative
 T. Bell, 16-19 Provision
 K. Albiston, PVI Representative
 A. Brown, Nursery Schools Representative
 J. O'Connor, PVI Representative
 J. Coughlan, Primary Representative - Infant School
 N. Hunt, Pupil Referral Unit Representative
 J. Vincent, All Through Schools Representative
 E. Haver, Special Academy Representative
 S. Ainsworth, Special Schools Representative (Substitute)

Action

SCF20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Richard Collings, Emlyn Wright and Syd Broxton.

SCF21 MINUTES - 11 OCTOBER 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

Further to item SCF13 it was confirmed that the information had now been received on the number of staff who met the revised Quality Supplement factor.

SCF22 MINUTES - 8 NOVEMBER 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

SCF23 FORECAST DSG OUTTURN FOR 2017-18

The Forum received the forecast outturn position of DSG budgets for 2017-18.

It was reported that when the budgets were being prepared, there were concerns that there would be

insufficient funding for all amounts that were required and there would be a need to use some carry forward. The report presented the forecasts for the Schools Block; Early Years Block; and High Needs Block based on expenditure up to 3 January 2018.

Since the report was written and published, Officers advised the Forum that the 2018-19 carry forward had now reduced from £885,300 to approximately £400,000. This was due to further demands on the high needs budget and increasing financial requests from individual schools.

A further detailed report would be presented at the June meeting of the Schools Forum.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SCF24 SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING FOR 2018-19

The Forum received the Schools Block Funding for 2018-19.

A special meeting of the Schools Forum was held in November to discuss the outcome of the consultation with schools regarding which funding formula option to recommend to Executive Board. Following discussion, it was agreed to recommend that an Interim Funding Formula be used and modelling work on this commenced the day after the meeting.

Officers advised however that after a few weeks it was evident that an interim formula could not be built within the constraints of the Schools Block regulations and that did not adversely affect the funding for more schools than would be adversely affected by the NFF with transitional protection.

A decision was made to return to Executive Board in December to ask that the National Funding Formula with transitional protection be used. This was in line with the majority of responders to the consultation and would minimise both the number of schools adversely affected by the change in formula and the level of their losses in funding.

The report went on to discuss grant allocations for 2018-19; pupil numbers; the current position; and the minimum funding guarantee (MFG). Members discussed the MFG as this could now be varied between minus (-) 1.5% to plus (+) 0.5%. It was agreed that this could be kept to the -1.5% as with previous years in Halton.

It was noted that the decision on the funding formula, which would be submitted by 18 January 2018, would be taken by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and this would be known by the end of February. Once the approval was received, Schools Block budgets would be confirmed to head teachers as soon as possible. Early Years and High Needs Blocks would be notified by the end of March.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

1. note the report; and
2. agree that the Minimum Funding Guarantee be set at -1.5%.

SCF25 EARLY YEARS FUNDING FOR 2018-19

The Forum received the current position on Early Years funding for 2018-19.

Members were reminded that Halton moved to the new Early Years National Funding Formula (NFF) as required by the then Department for Education in April 2017.

The Early Years NFF Operational Guidance was released towards the end of November with no major changes to the NFF requirements. Officers were advised of the hourly rate that would be funded for 2018-19 and the indicative grant allocation, although this would be updated during the year. Following the consultation with all stakeholders during the Autumn Term the intention was to change the quality supplement criteria for 2018-19 to support staff with qualifications at Levels 5, 6 and 7 plus Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) Early Years.

It was reported that the hourly rate received from the DfE for 2016-17 was £5.69 which reduced to £5.40 for 2017-18. This was reducing again to £5.13 per hour for 2018-19.

Members were advised that due to the low level of DSG reserves it was likely that the only way to keep within budget was to reduce the hourly rates. Concerns were raised by the Forum regarding this. It was stressed by Officers that this was not what was wanted and every effort would be made to minimise any such reduction. However, it was also noted that if the overall funding for Early Years was being reduced by a possible £400,000 to £500,000, there would be no other option available to the authority.

RESOVED: That the information be noted.

SCF26 HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

The Forum received an update on the estimated high needs deficit for 2018-19 and the proposed options to bring expenditure in line with the budget allocation to Halton.

It was noted that following consultation and discussion at Schools Forum it was agreed in November 2017 that 0.5% could be transferred from the Schools Budget to the High Needs budget in 2018-19, which added a total of £421,594.

The Forum was advised that this transfer of funds had been helpful and reduced the deficit but it still left a funding gap of £1,654,547. Officers had scrutinised each area of the budget and presented options relating to each area for consideration by the Forum, as presented in the report.

The Forum discussed the funding gap and the proposals made by Officers. It was agreed however that a special meeting of the Forum was needed to discuss and dedicate more time to consider the proposals. The Forum also briefly discussed the potential impacts of the Behaviour Support Team when it was implemented; training courses available for teachers in dealing with behaviour issues; and exclusions in Halton.

RESOLVED: That a special meeting of the Forum be arranged to further discuss the proposed options available to reduce the High Needs funding gap.

SCF27 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19

A summary of the Capital Programmes for 2018-19 for the People Directorate was provided to the Schools Forum.

Members were advised that in October 2017 the Department for Education announced the schools Capital Grant allocations for 2018-19 and confirmed that there would be no change in the methodology used in 2017-18 for the coming year 2018-19, so Halton should receive the same amount as in 2017-18, £1,086,031. Officers advised the Forum that Halton would also receive funding from the *Healthy Pupils Capital Funding* (from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy) and from the *Special Provision Capital Funding* to be invested in provision for children and young

people with SEND aged 0-25 (Halton's allocation would be £500,000 provided over 3 years).

In paragraph 3.4 the report provided details of the funding available to support capital projects across the school estate and 4.1 gave details of how the School Condition Funding would be allocated.

It was noted that consultation with schools would take place regarding their contributions to the proposed works, following the Council's consideration of the budget report in March 2018. If the respective schools (Appendix 1) could not or were not willing to contribute, any proposed projects would not be carried out in 2018-19.

RESOLVED: That the capital funding available for 2018-19 be noted.

Meeting ended at 6.10 p.m.

SCHOOLS FORUM

At a meeting of the Schools Forum on Wednesday, 21 February 2018 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillor T. McInerney, Observer
 A. McIntyre, Education, Inclusion & Provision, HBC
 A. Jones, Financial Management, HBC
 A. Jones, Democratic Services, HBC
 N. Middlehurst, Financial Management, HBC
 E. Wright, Secondary Academy Representative
 T. Bell, 16-19 Provision
 A. Brown, Nursery Schools Representative (part)
 J. O'Connor, PVI Representative
 J. Coughlan, Primary Representative - Infant School (part)
 R. Collings, Community Primary School Representative
 S. Broxton, Primary Governor Representative (part)
 N. Hunt, Pupil Referral Unit Representative
 J. Wilson, Secondary Governor Representative
 K. Landrum, (Chair) Primary Representative - VA School
 J. Vincent, All Through Schools Representative
 E. Haver, Special Academy Representative
 S. Ainsworth, Special Schools Representative (Sub)

Action

SCF28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received for the meeting.

SCF29 HIGH NEEDS UPDATE

The Forum received an update on the High Needs budgets. The report presented the following items, which required the approval of the Schools Forum:

- the reductions to High Needs budgets required to set a balanced budget for 2018/19;
- the change in practice when applying for enhanced provision; and
- permission to make an application to the Secretary of State for exemption to the Minimum Funding Guarantee using the disapplication process.

The Forum was aware that nationally the level of demand for support for pupils with special educational needs had been increasing over recent years. However, there had not been a corresponding increase in the level of funding allocated to local authorities to meet this need.

Halton's position was outlined to schools in the consultation in October 2017 and at Schools Forum meetings in November 2017 and January 2018. It was noted that representation was made to the Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, in November 2017 about the funding pressures and the impact this was having on outcomes for children, young people and families in the Borough. Halton was advised that it must manage within the allocated resources.

Members were presented with the savings proposals required to reduce the level of overspend in 2017/18 and to balance the budget in 2018/19 in paragraph 3.8 of the report and each proposal was explained. Following this the revised High Needs Budget was presented which showed that after the revisions, a shortfall of £220,652 still existed.

The Forum discussed the proposals set out in the report and raised a number of issues:

- concern about the level of reduction in the enhanced provision budget and the impact this would have;
- concern about the consideration of school balances and increases to some schools budgets from 2018;
- The need for new criteria that would apply when schools applied for enhanced provision;
- The increase of behavioural issues of children in schools and the need for more support to tackle this issue;
- The lack of alternative provision in the Borough;
- The impact on special schools if funding levels were reduced;
- increased numbers of post 16 students; and
- The high numbers of children and young people placed in independent placements.

The Forum was asked to vote on the three recommendations mentioned above and agreed as stated below.

RESOLVED: That the Forum:

- 1) Agree the options for the reduction of High Needs Funding as stated in paragraph 3.8 of the report ensuring that the budget was brought in line with the resources available;
- 2) Agree the changes to the funding of enhanced provision in principle, subject to the development of criteria; and

- 3) Agree to an application to the Secretary of State to seek permission for exemption to the Minimum Funding Guarantee using the disapplication process, subject to the agreement of the Special Schools.

Meeting ended at 4.15 p.m.

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 21st March 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: Early Years Funding for 2018-19

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 **To report to the School Forum the current position on Early Years funding for 2018-19**

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the centrally retained budgets be agreed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

Halton moved to the new Early Years National Funding Formula as required by the Department for Education in April 2017. We are now preparing for the 2018-19 funding formula.

Update

We have an indicative allocation of £9,479,357 for the provision of Early Years support. We are continuing to follow the Early Years Funding Formula with a universal base rate for all sectors, a deprivation factor using IDACI and the quality factor as per the autumn consultation for staff across all sectors who are qualified at level 5 and above. The level of maintained nursery school transitional protection has not yet been confirmed so it is assumed to be at the same level as for 2017-18.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing, the cash values have not yet been finalised so will be tabled at the meeting. As reported at the January meeting, we are seeing a reduction of 27p per hour in funding from the DfE to Halton. Therefore, the calculations are extensive to ensure we are setting hourly rates that are affordable to the level of Early Years grant that will be received.

Centrally Retained Budgets

The following are the budgets we are proposing to centrally retain, with their comparison to 2017-18 budgets.

	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2017-18</u>
Staffing	£160,740	£156,150
Supplies & services	£45,740	£45,740

Premises costs	£24,210	£24,210
Transport costs	£3,000	£3,000
Contribution to Early Intervention Team	£50,000	£50,000
Early Years Pupil Premium	£120,270	£99,920
Contribution to Capital post	£5,000	Nil
EY SEN Inclusion Fund	£80,000	From High Needs Block

The elements of the above centrally retained budgets relating to 3 & 4 year old provision total £244,440 which equates to 3.02% of the total allocation so is well within the maximum 5% allowed in the regulations.

The elements relating to centrally retained budgets for 2 year old provision total just £44,250 or 2.81%. There is no maximum for centrally retained budgets for 2 year old provision within the regulations.

Early Years Pupil Premium (at an assumed level matching 2017-18) and EY SEN Inclusion Fund are not counted as centrally retained budgets as they are devolved to providers throughout the year.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 21st March 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: Central School Services Block 2018-19

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 **To report to the School Forum on the Central School Services Block for 2018-19**

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDED:

- (1) The report is noted.
- (2) The highlighted budgets are agreed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Central School Services Block (CSSB) is separated from the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant for the first time in 2018-19. However, budgets were set as part of the Schools Block for 2017-18 and have been included here for comparison.

Some costs now attributed to the CSSB were funded from our carry forward balance for 2017-18, as agreed by Schools Forum, so are excluded from the figures below.

3.1 Centrally retained budgets

Below are the centrally retained budgets from the CSSB with comparison to 2017-18, excluding where funded from carry forward balances.

	2018-19	2017-18
Contribution to Safeguarding post	£47,100	£47,100
Teachers Panel	£19,460	£19,460
Former Retained ESG Staffing	£178,877	£165,674
Former Retained ESG Central Recharges	£98,885	£122,840

For information:

Licences	£98,550	£94,900
Staffing	£55,683	from cfwd
Dismissals	£127,110	£127,110
Health and Safety	£114,000	from cfwd
Schools Contingency	£198,780	£209,476

Staff Responsibilities	£25,470	£26,830
FSM Eligibility	£6,520	£7,387

The Contribution to the Safeguarding post is an historic budget that cannot be increased above £47,100. The funding for Teachers Panel is also an historic budget that cannot be increased due to the regulations in place.

The budgets for the former Retained element of the Education Services Grant total £277,762 and contributes to the cost of Financial Management posts, Senior Management posts, Investigation of Complaints and SACRE plus associated central recharge costs.

The Licences budget is to meet the cost of the school licences purchased centrally by the ESFA and recharged to local authorities. As such, we are required to inform Schools Forum of the amount we will be charged.

As previously agreed, the former General Duties element of ESG has been de-delegated from maintained schools, which covers part posts within Financial Management and Capital works plus Health and Safety and the Dismissals budget. Apart from the Dismissals budget, these were funded from our carry forward balance for 2017-18

The maintained primary and secondary historic de-delegated budgets for Schools contingency, Staff Responsibilities and FSM Eligibility have also been previously agreed.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

5.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None

REPORT TO: School Forum

DATE: 21st March 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: High Needs Top-Up Funding Levels for 2018-19

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report to the School Forum on the Top-Up Funding Rates for 2018-19.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDED:

(1) The report is noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

As previously reported, there is a funding gap between the grant allocated by the DfE and High Need budget required for 2018-19. The transfer from the Schools Budget and a range of savings were identified, discussed and agreed at the meeting on 21st February 2018 reducing the shortfall from £2,112,101 to £220,652. Further reductions will be needed in 2018/2019 to meet the estimated budget shortfall.

3.1 Special Schools

These are funded at £10,000 per place plus a top-up dependent upon each pupil's provision.

At the time of writing the report, discussions are continuing with the Head Teachers of the special schools regarding top-up funding levels for 2018-19 and these will be tabled at the meeting.

3.2 Resource Bases

Unfilled resource base places are still funded at £10,000 per place while filled places are funded at £6,000 per place and the pupil is counted and funded within the mainstream funding formula.

Top-up funding can only be reduced to the same level as the Minimum Funding Guarantee as applied to the mainstream funding formula. Therefore, we are reducing the top-up values by 1.5%.

Appendix A shows the 2018-19 top-up values.

3.3 Pupil Referral Unit

PRU's are funded at £10,000 per place plus a top-up per pupil. A review is underway with a proposal to introduce a single top-up value for 2018-19. This will be determined at a meeting on 28th March.

3.4 Enhanced Provision funding

The Enhanced provision budget for primary and secondary schools has been reduced by over £720,000. In previous years, schools have had the opportunity to apply to the Panel to fund the costs of support for a pupil in excess of the notional SEN £6,000. The level of savings required in 2018/2019 mean that new criteria is now being developed. As part of this new criteria applications will now only be considered for Enhanced Provision where a school is unable to meet the cost of this support from within their own resources.

3.5 Work is urgently being undertaken to identify the level of enhanced provision top up funding needed to meet the current obligations and then to identify the funding available for any applications approved under the new criteria. This information will be provided at the meeting.

3.6 As in previous years, the Financial Management Team will circulate details to Head Teachers of pupils in their schools where current records show eligibility for enhanced provision top-up funding each term. Schools will be asked to check this information carefully to prevent any errors in funding.

Centrally retained budgets

Below are the centrally retained budgets from the High Needs Block with comparison to 2017-18.

	2018-19	2017-18
Staffing and Supplies	£1,377,920	£1,390,158
Independent Special Schools	£2,412,450	£2,463,230
Inter Authority Recoupment	£175,000	£175,000
Post 16 provision	£769,000	£1,069,000
Specialist Equipment	£20,000	£40,000
Top up funding / enhanced (EY)	Nil	£80,000
Top-up funding / enhanced	£1,000,000	£1,739,327
SEND Commissioner	£50,780	Nil
SEMH Team	£255,870	Nil
Total	£6,061,020	£6,956,715

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

5.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None

Appendix A

Special Unit Calculations 2018-19							
		<i>Feb 17</i>	<i>adj for per place change</i>		<i>Jan-18</i>		
	Unit	<i>Actual nos</i>	<i>1st pupil</i>	<i>cash value</i>	<i>Actual nos</i>	<i>1st pupil</i>	<i>cash value</i>
Primary							
Weston Point	EBD	7	£5,066.67	£77,466.70	7	£4,990.67	£76,934.69
The Brow	Assessment	6.50	£3,002.75	£63,517.87	3.50	£2,957.71	£66,351.98
The Brow	SPL	5	£0.00	£80,000.00	6.00	£0.00	£76,000.00
Woodside	EBD	7	£4,097.92	£70,685.42	6	£4,036.45	£70,218.71
Palacefields Acad	SPL	7	£0.00	£72,000.00	7	£0.00	£72,000.00
Simms Cross	ASD KS1/2	13	£4,534.70	£146,951.16	14	£4,466.68	£146,533.51
Oakfield	Assessment	5.50	£4,109.09	£70,600.02	4.50	£4,047.45	£70,213.54
Oakfield	SPL	8	£0.00	£68,000.00	6.00	£0.00	£76,000.00
The Grange	ASD KS1/2	13	£5,832.69	£163,825.02	11	£5,745.20	£159,197.20
	Total budget			£813,046.19			£813,449.63
Secondary							
The Grange	ASD KS3/4	7	£6,664.76	£78,653.31	5	£6,564.79	£72,823.94
The Grange	SLCN	5	£1,408.60	£87,043.01	4	£1,387.47	£89,549.88
OCA	SLCN	5	£1,019.57	£85,097.86	3	£1,004.28	£91,012.83
Sts Peter & Paul	ASD KS3/4	4	£5,437.82	£65,751.29	4	£5,356.25	£65,669.72
	Total budget	93		£316,545.47	81		£319,056.38