

**REPORT TO:** School Forum  
**DATE:** 17 January 2018  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision  
**SUBJECT:** High Needs Update

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.1** This report summarises the estimated high needs deficit for 2018/2019 and proposes a range of options to bring expenditure in line with the budget allocated to Halton.

**2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Forum consider and agree options for the reduction of high needs funding ensuring that the budget is brought in line with the resources available.**

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

**3.1** Following consultation and discussion at School Forum it was agreed in November 2017 that 0.5% could be transferred from the Schools Budget to the High Needs budget in 2018/2019. £421,594 has therefore been added to the High Needs budget.

**3.2** Although this transfer of funds is helpful and reduces the deficit it still leaves a total of £1,654,547 funding gap. Each area of the budget has now been scrutinised and School Forum are asked to consider each of the options listed below.

**Early Years Top Up Funding** **£80,000**

It is proposed this funding is met from within the Early Years allocation.

**5% - Reduction in Top up Funding** **£269,000**

The proposal is to reduce top up funding by a minimum of 5% across primary, secondary and special schools, with the exception of the PRU.

**Placements at Independent Special Schools** **£398,000**

A number of high cost placements will cease at the end of the 2017/2018 academic year. Every effort will need to be made by all schools and academies to support Halton pupils within borough. This reduction in costs will bring expenditure in line with the budget. Once appointed the role of the SEND Commissioner will be to try and explore other options for reducing the costs of out of borough provision, by renegotiating placement costs and seeking opportunities to support pupils within local schools within the borough.

**Inter Authority High Needs Placements** **£80,000**

Reduction in the costs of High Needs Placements in other Local Authority provision.

**Pupil Referral Unit** **£300,000**

Review and reduction of the level of top up funding provided for pupils at the PRU.

**Behaviour Support Team** **£127,930**

The recruitment timeline for the new Behaviour Support team means that the team will not be in place until September 2018. The allocated funding has therefore been reduced by 4/12 for 2018/2019.

**Removal of High Needs Contingency** **£8,185**

Remove this contingency budget as this is no longer affordable.

**Post-16 Administration Posts** **£18,000**

It is proposed to removal funding for this post.

**Reduction in Supplies and Services** **£5,000**

It is proposed to remove the funding allocated to the SEN Assessment Team for supplies and Services.

- 3.2 Although there will be an increase in student numbers at Riverside College it is proposed to cap the element 3 allocation to the same level as allocated in 2017/2018 to ensure affordability.
- 3.3 The options listed above will save a total of £1,281,115 leaving a deficit of £368,432. If the reduction in the level of top up funding across the board is reduced by 12% this would produce a balanced budget.