REPORT TO:	**Schools Forum**	
DATE:	**15th January 2020**	
REPORTING OFFICER:	**Senior Finance Officer**	
SUBJECT:	**Schools Block funding for 2020-21**	
WARDS:	**Borough wide**	

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report to the Schools Forum the Schools Block funding for 2020-21.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 The report is noted.
2.2 The level of Minimum Funding Guarantee to be applied to the Schools Block funding formula for 2020-21 is agreed.
2.3 That maintained school representatives decide by phase which de-delegated budgets they agree to fund in 2020-21.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Grant settlement
The Dedicated Schools Grant settlement was announced on 19th December giving a total of £92,581,025 for the Schools Block for 2020-21, an increase of £5,649,868 to the 2019-20 settlement.

3.2 Pupil Numbers
Pupil numbers in primary and secondary mainstream schools have again increased overall, although primary numbers have decreased.

	2020-21	2019-20	Variance
Primary	10,671	10,720	-49
Secondary	7,610	7,427	183
Total	18,281	18,147	134

3.3 Current position
As in previous years at the time of writing the individual Schools Block budgets have not been calculated. As the October census data and grant allocations have now been received, we should be able to table the indicative allocations at the meeting. Once approval has been given by the ESFA to our funding formula, we will confirm individual Schools Block budgets for 2020-21.

3.4 Minimum Funding Guarantee
We are required to agree the level of MFG to be applied to the Schools Block funding formula for 2020-21. As per the outcome of the

consultation with schools, the decision on the level of MFG is to be taken at the January meeting of Schools Forum. For 2020-21 the level of MFG can be set between plus 0.5% and plus 1.84%.   The recommendation of the actual level of MFG will be tabled at the meeting but it is thought it can be set at the highest level of 1.84%.

3.5   De-delegation
Maintained school representatives will be asked to decide at the January meeting which de-delegated budgets they wish to fund for 2020-21.   The services, per pupil amounts and totals for each school will be tabled at the meeting as they have not yet been calculated.

3.6   Transfer of funding to the High Needs Block

For 2020-21 the High Needs Block allocation has increased by £2,292,555. We have not requested any formal transfer of funds from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2020-21. Therefore, the grant of £92,581,025 will be fully allocated to mainstream schools and academies through the Schools Block funding formula.   If we do overspend or plans for 2020-2021 exceed our budget allocation then a transfer from schools and School Forum in 2021-2022 will be sought.

However, in line with the Inclusion Charter developed with schools in 2019 and school's responsibility as part of the Local Offer, we would hope to see schools using this funding to improve their provision for children and young people with SEND, thereby reducing the need for specialist placements.

Please see agenda item 6 for an update on the Peopletoo Findings and Recommendations.

4.0   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   The Schools Block funding formula must comply with all relevant regulations as set out by the Department for Education.

4.2   If de-delegation is rejected for any budget by any phase of maintained schools, the Council will need to decide if it can source other funding to continue the service(s) to 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 We need to comply with the regulations otherwise could have formula imposed on us.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

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