

REPORT TO: Schools Forum
DATE: 26th February 2020
REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer
SUBJECT: Central School Services Block 2020-21
WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report to the School Forum on the Central School Services Block for 2020-21.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 The report is noted.
- 2.2 The budgets are agreed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Central School Services Block (CSSB) is now a separate block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. For 2020-21 the grant allocation is £665,450. We are required to inform and seek approval from Schools Forum for budgets funded from this block. De-delegated budgets that sit within this block were approved at the January meeting.

3.2 Centrally retained budgets
Below are the centrally retained budgets funded from the CSSB with their comparison to 2019-20:

	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2019-20</u>
Contribution to Safeguarding post	£37,680	£47,100
Teacher's Panel	£19,460	£19,460
Licences	£104,480	£102,357
Premature Retirements	£100,000	£100,000

From the former Education Services Grant retained element funding now part of the CSSB allocation:

Staffing	£192,800	£187,960
Central Recharges	£109,860	£107,710

3.3 The Contribution to Safeguarding post is an historic commitment. The DfE have started to reduce the funding for such historic commitments and has reduced it by 20% for 2020-21. The post is currently occupied on a part time basis so no additional funding is required.

The Licences budget is to meet the cost of the school licences purchased centrally by the ESFA and recharged to local authorities.

We have been notified of the charge for 2020-21 which is an increase of more than 2% on the 2019-20 charge.

The Premature Retirement budget is £501,930 of which the DSG contributes £100,000.

3.4 The former ESG retained element funding contributes to the cost of Financial Management posts, Senior Management posts, Investigation of Complaints and SACRE plus associated administrative costs and overheads.

3.5 We therefore have an unallocated balance of £101,170 which we propose to transfer to the High Needs Block to support the budgetary pressures on that block.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 If funding is refused for any budget the Council will need to decide whether it can source other funding to support the service(s). All services funded by the CSSB are in accordance to the regulations.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Support services for children in schools is directly impacted by de-delegated budget decisions.

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 There is a risk to the Council that funding for staff and services in place to provide support to children in schools may be reduced should representatives on Schools Forum wish to reject any budget.

7.0 EQUALTY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 The local authority must discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to all schools and settings.