



Schools Forum

**Wednesday, 22 June 2016 4.00 p.m.
The Board Room - Municipal Building,
Widnes**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R', written over a faint rectangular stamp.

Chief Executive

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

*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 Monday, 10 October 2016*

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

Part I

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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 Monday, 14 March 2016 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: J. Rigby (Chair) Secondary Academy Representative
 Councillor Philbin, Observer
 I. Kirkham, Secondary Academy Representative
 K. Albiston, PVI Representative
 J. O'Connor, PVI Representative
 J. Coughlan, Primary Representative
 L. Feakes, School with Nursery Unit Representative
 A. Brown, Nursery Schools Representative
 S. Broxton, Primary Governor Representative
 N. Hunt, Pupil Referral Unit Representative
 J. Vincent, All Through Schools Representative
 A. Jones, Financial Management, HBC
 A. McIntyre, Education, Inclusion & Provision, HBC
 A. Jones, Democratic Services, HBC
 N. Unsworth, Financial Management, HBC

Action

SCF38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Lesley Davies, Marjorie Constantine, Richard Collings and Karl Landrum.

SCF39 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

SCF40 HIGH NEEDS FUNDING - TOP UP FUNDING LEVELS FOR 2016-17

The Schools Forum received the top-up funding rates for 2016-17.

It was noted that the High Needs Block was under increasing pressure, especially the top-up funding costs. It was estimated that in 2015-16 the Council would spend approximately £3m more on High Needs provision than was received as the High Needs Grant.

The report presented the funding details for the following:

- Special Schools – Appendix A showed the 2016-17 top-up values and agreed Banding Criteria;

- Resource Bases – Appendix B showed the 2016-17 top-up values;
- Resource Base Service Level Agreements – funding for ASC Outreach and HI Signer SLA's were currently being reviewed;
- Pupil Referral Unit – Appendix C showed the 2016-17 top-up values; and
- Enhanced Provision Funding – the Financial Management Team would circulate details to Head Teachers of pupils in their schools who were eligible for top-up funding each term.

RESOLVED: That the report and associated Appendices are noted.

SCF41 EARLY YEARS FUNDING FOR 2016-17

The Forum received the Additional Notional SEN Funding criteria and allocations for 2016-17 for agreement.

Officers proposed that the funding factors for the maintained sector remain unchanged at – basic per pupil, Deprivation (using IDACI), Lump sum and LA Rates (for nursery schools only).

It was also proposed that they also remain unchanged for the PVI Sector at – basic per pupil, Deprivation (IDACI) and LA rates.

It was noted that the cash values for the funding factors for maintained and PVI settings were still being calculated at the time of writing the report. These were now available and tabled by Officers at the meeting.

PVI representatives raised concerns over the values per hour and the variations between settings. This was discussed and it was agreed that they could be reviewed at a local level and that a report would be submitted to the June meeting of the Schools Forum. In the meantime Members agreed to the approval of the criteria and allocations for 2016-17.

Anne Jones

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

- 1) notes the report;
- 2) agrees the funding formula for Maintained Early Years settings; and

3) agrees the funding formula for the PVI settings.

SCF42 EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM

Forum Members received a presentation from Sharon Williams – the Headteacher of Halton’s Virtual School, on the *Early Years Children in Care – Personal Education Plans and Pupil Premium*.

The presentation covered the following:

- Statutory responsibilities for Children in Care (CIC);
- Personal Education Plans (PEP’s);
- Halton’s Early Years PEP – developed in partnership with Early Years Providers;
- Early Years Pupil Premium – Conditions of Grant;
- Halton’s Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) model;
- What EYPP could be used for;
- What EYPP cannot be used for; and
- How the setting would be paid for.

Sharon advised the Forum that she welcomed feedback from the Schools at any time regarding the completing of Personal Education Plans. A copy of the presentation is available from the Clerk.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

SCF43 CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2016/17

The Schools Forum received a report that provided a summary of the capital programmes for 2016-17 for the People and Economy Directorate and confirmed capital allocations from the Department for Education.

The Forum was reminded that in February 2015 the Department for Education (DfE) announced the schools capital grant allocations for 2015-16 as well as indicative allocations for the two year period 2016-17 and 2017-18. In February 2016 the Department confirmed the 2016-17 allocations. It was noted that by introducing three year allocations, the DfE was enabling those responsible for the school estate to plan effectively and make strategic investment decisions.

Members were referred to the table in paragraph 3.1 of the report which detailed the confirmed funding notified by the DfE for 2016-17. Paragraph 4.1 of the report provided details of how the School Condition and Capital Expenditure Revenue Account funding would be allocated. The Capital

repairs programme for 2016-17 could be found at Appendix 1 of the report.

RESOLVED: That the capital funding available for 2016-17 be noted.

SCF44 HALTON SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS APRIL 2016 UPDATE

The Forum was informed of the consultation response and proposed changes to the Halton Scheme for Financing Schools (SFFS) for April 2016. The Halton SFFS draft version for April 2016 was appended to the report.

It was reported that further to advising the Forum in the January 2016 meeting, a consultation with schools regarding changes to the Halton SFFS had now been conducted. It was noted that some of the changes were required by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and some were changes that the Finance Officers wished to make in relation to Central Reports and Local Bank Account returns.

Members were advised that following the closure of the consultation, only nine responses were received with only two being from chequebook schools (a summary of responses were given in Appendix A of the report).

Members were also referred to Appendix B of the report which contained the new wording for the affected sections of the Halton SFFS. With regards to the request for central reports for non-chequebook schools to be automatically run and emailed, it was confirmed that this could continue subject to successful testing, which was being carried out at the moment. It was hoped that this could start from 1 May 2016.

The Forum also received an update from officers on the National Fair Funding (NFF) Conference held in London on 8 March 2016. The information was tabled so it has been attached at the end of the minutes for information, together with appendices A, B, C and D.

It was agreed by the Forum that a sub-group be set up so that Members could provide a collective response to the public consultations on the NFF. It was noted that the consultation document would be accessible via the Council's website and was therefore open for anyone to respond to. The Forum would be contacted via email once the date of the sub-group meeting had been arranged.

RESOLVED: That Schools Forum

Ann McIntyre

- 1) notes the consultation responses;
- 2) agrees the changes to the Halton SFFS effective from 1 April 2016;
- 3) receives the NFF Conference update documents (appended to the minutes); and
- 4) agrees that Halton Schools Forum submit a collective response to the NFF consultations.

SCF45 UNITED UTILITIES WATER CHARGES

The Forum was advised that Officers had attended a North West (NW) Regional meeting of Finance Officers where the water charges for schools in the regions were again discussed. Currently schools in the North West paid approximately £16m per year more than schools in the South East region, even though there were a similar number of schools and pupils in both regions.

Members were advised that the water market was reforming from April 2017 but 95% of the charges would still be set by United Utilities. It was noted that the DEFRA survey last year had a response from 85 NW schools and which had now raised the Government's attention with the issue.

The Forum was advised that a colleague in Sefton Council had prepared a template letter for schools, Local Authorities and Schools Forums etc to write to DEFRA when the next consultation opens. This would be circulated as soon as it was received. Officers recommended that within the National Funding Formula consultation and High Needs Formula consultation that comments be included about the additional costs incurred by schools in the NW region. The hope was that schools be reclassified as community groups so they will only be required to pay £135 per year for surface drainage.

RESOVLED: That the update be noted.

SCF46 NURTURE PROVISION

The Forum was informed of the National Nurturing School Award which was a new programme available for schools to learn how to develop a nurturing environment to support children and young people so that they could develop skills, make friends and deal more calmly with the challenges they may face in life.

It was reported that this new stakeholder programme allowed schools to develop and embed a nurturing culture that enhanced stakeholder attachment and engagement. The programme had been developed and was administered by The Nurture Group Network, the world's leading centre for culture in education and awarding body of the *Certificate in Theory and Practice of Nurture Groups*, the nationally recognised qualification for running a nurture group in schools.

The Forum was advised of the benefits of the Programme to the pupils; parents; teachers; schools and communities. The nurturing principles were based on valuing not only the pupils but also staff and parents, and seeking to understand and respect them as unique individuals, placing their personal development as the highest priority.

Officers advised that with regards to commitments needed from schools for the Programme; the following was required:

- At least one member of staff needed to attend the training for *'the theory and practice of nurture groups'*
- two members of staff must attend the initial two day training event (one of those being from the Senior Leadership Team);
- These two people needed to be identified early and remain unchanged throughout the period of time;
- One member of staff from the two day training was to lead the school through the work needed to become a nurturing school, create the evidence and submit the information to the nurture group network;
- At least one of those staff attends the full days meetings with the consultant and other schools, throughout the year (this was a commitment from the school to release the staff when required);
- To allow staff to implement changes that were necessary to ensure a nurturing school award; and
- Undertake day one visit from the Consultant to begin assessing the developments needed, before the two day training event, looking at the six principles of nurture.

It was noted that the training would be available for all secondary schools including secondary special schools, and the 3 nursery schools. The training would be split into two groups; (1) secondary schools and (2) special schools and nurseries, with two active days support for each school. In addition, key staff within the Local Authority would receive

the Boxall training.

With regards to funding it was noted that this could be accommodated within £155,180 agreed by Schools Forum on 16 March 2016.

RESOLVED: Schools Forum agrees to fund the proposed National Schools Nurturing Award from £155,180 allocated.

SCF47 NEXT YEAR'S MEETING DATES

The Forum was presented with next year's meeting dates as follows:

- 22 June 2016 at 4pm
- 10 October 2016 at 4pm
- 23 January 2017 at 4pm
- 22 March 2017 at 4pm

Meeting ended at 5.30 pm

SCF48 UPDATE FROM THE NATIONAL FAIR FUNDING CONFERENCE,
LONDON - TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2016

Below are the headlines of the proposals as per the consultation announced Monday 7th March 2016 and additional comments from the conference.

The proposals cover the Schools Budget, High Needs Budget and the New Central Schools budget. The Early Years budget will be circulated shortly, with no indication of the timescale.

The Schools Block budget will be ring-fenced and LA's will be required to spend the whole of this block on Schools – primary and secondary. The ability to move monies between the blocks is being removed. Appendix 1 shows the proposed factors for the National Funding Formula while Appendix B shows the provisional data sources for each factor. It should be noted that the LAC factor and mobility factor will NOT appear in the National Funding Formula from 2019-20 and the Post-16 factor (not used in Halton) will be removed from 2017-18.

To allow for this and in recognition of failings of the S.251 Budget return, each LA will be asked to identify the baseline of spend within each of the new blocks based on the 2016-17 budget. Where we have earmarked some reserves to support budgetary requirements, these reserves will NOT be taken into account for the baseline. The baseline will total the DSG allocation for the year and exclude any carry forward amounts being used to meet shortfalls.

The Central Schools budget will be made up of the current Schools Block central spend and the Education Services Grant. The central spend within the High Needs and the Early Years blocks of the DSG will remain within those sectors. The general funding rate of the ESG will disappear, but it is not completely clear when that will occur as the DfE recognise that the 2016/17 reduction can be met by "efficiencies", but the rest cannot and the DfE are seeking views on the statutory duties that could be removed or reformed. The DfE will be consulting on a proposal to retain some of their maintained schools' DSG to cover the statutory duties LA's carry out for schools, which will over time diminish as more and more schools convert to academies. One of the main areas that the DfE are proposing to remove is School Improvement. Schools and academies will continue to be allowed to buy into LA services by way of SLA's.

It is likely that there will be transitional arrangements, probably like an MFG, for the Central Spend block. Each of the blocks will have different transitional arrangements with High Needs being 5 years, while it may appear that the Schools Block could go beyond the 2 years to the NFF introduction in 2019/20.

There will also be MFG's for each of the blocks that will build up into an MFG for each LA. The DfE have stated that there is a finite budget so if MFG amounts exceed that amount they will have to be funded by capping any gains. There is currently a requirement that the cap on gains cannot exceed the total MFG.

For 2017-18 and 2018-19 the EFA will calculate individual school budgets using the National Funding Formula – deemed a 'shadow' formula, add on any MFG required

and will then pass the total of all school budgets for each LA to the LA. The LA can then ask its Schools Forum to decide on the actual funding formula to use and may be able to use different levels of MFG to the National MFG as part of the transition arrangements. From 2019-20 individual school budgets will be calculated by the EFA alone. Each LA will receive notification of the individual school budgets and be required to pass on the full amounts to each school in the same way as we currently work PP and AGS grants. There is NO requirement for non-chequebook schools to have their own bank accounts. LA's will be allowed to continue to hold school budgets and pay staff/invoices on their behalf as currently.

For Multi Academy Trusts, the budgets for each academy within the MAT will be calculated individually in the same manner as for a maintained school. The budgets will then be added together and passed to the MAT. The flexibility currently allowing MAT's to divert funding from one academy to another within the MAT is NOT going to be reviewed.

The role, functions and membership of Schools Forums will be reviewed for 2019-20 when the National Funding Formula is introduced.

The current arrangements for de-delegation of budgets from schools to be held centrally will end with the introduction of the National Funding Formula in 2019-20. Traded services will however be allowed to continue.

These arrangements should become clearer when Stage 2 begins and the detailed figures of the formula components become available.

Comments were made about the timing of the second stage consultation due to the London Mayoral elections, local elections and EU referendum and the purdah imposed before each one. Soon after the EU referendum, parliament will enter the summer recess and will not fully return until after the party conferences in October.

It was confirmed that the Pupil Premium grant will continue until 2019-20 at least. It is expected that funding for LAC through the PP+ grant will increase but it is unclear if the DSG will be cut to meet the cost of this increase.

High Needs Block

A stage one High Needs funding formula and other reforms consultation was also issued on Monday 7th March 2016.

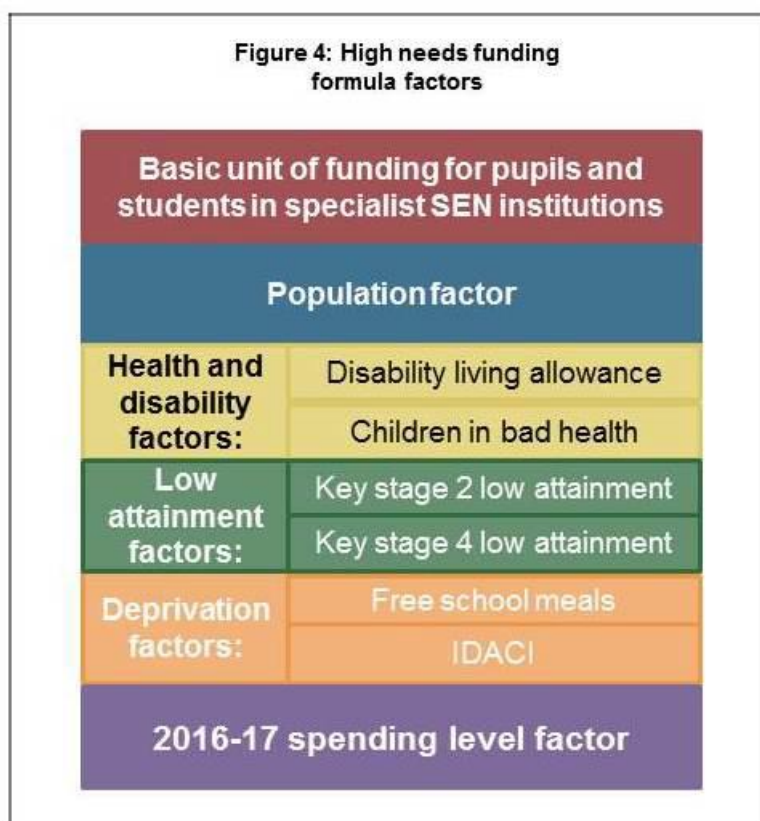
The High Needs Block funding is currently difficult to unpick – we are allocated a lump sum figure and don't have any knowledge of any calculations behind that figure which doesn't tie in with the Governments quest for transparency in funding. Research undertaken by the Isos Partnership were published in July 2015 and made 17 proposals on how the SEN funding system might be improved. The three main areas of these proposals are:

- Improvements to the way funding is allocated to make it fairer and more transparent, and to make sure that it is better targeted to where the needs are. The proposals include that the department considers a more formulaic approach to distributing high needs funding from national to local level;

- Better communication about how the system is intended to work, and to highlight effective practice. The proposals cover what local and national government might do to clarify expectations and to achieve greater transparency;
- Proposals to enable better decision making by frontline professionals, both those in local authorities responsible for commissioning SEN provision and those in schools and colleges who need to plan how to make the provision for their children and young people with SEN.

The EFA are proposing to introduce a formula base method of distributing High Needs funding from 2017-18 using proxy indicators of need rather than historic spend.

Below is the proposed structure of the High Needs funding formula.



The 'Children not in good health' element is from the population census data and Disability Living Allowance data as these were found to give a better indicator than other alternatives such as low birth weight.

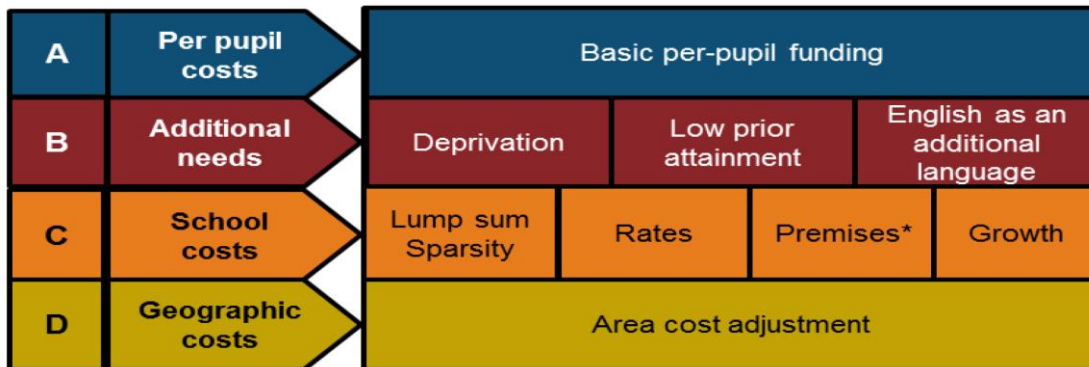
There are also proposals to have an overall Minimum Funding Guarantee that would prevent each local authority's high needs funding from reducing by more than a specified percentage each year.

Summary

The closing date for each consultation is Sunday 17th April 2016.

Keith Howkins (EFA Team Leader for the LA and Funding Policy Team) is attending a NW LMS Officers meeting in Manchester next week which Nicola Unsworth and Anne Jones will be attending. This is an opportunity to gain further insight and understanding of the proposals before our response is submitted.

The proposed building blocks and factors of the schools national funding formula



*Private finance initiative commitments, split sites and exceptional premises circumstances.

Provisional data sources for each factor in a national funding formula

For each of the factors below, we would expect to take into account local authorities' adjustments to data that are submitted through the authority proforma tool process.

Block	Factor	Data Source
Pupil Costs	Age-weighted pupil unit	Number of pupils on roll at primary, key stage 3 and key stage 4 at each school, as recorded in the October school census.
Additional needs	Deprivation	Number of pupils registered as eligible for free school meals as at the October school census. FSM eligibility is determined by the household's benefit entitlement status. The criteria are set out in the regulations.
	FSM (Current)	
	FSM (Ever 6)	Number of pupils registered as eligible for free school meals as at the January census, matched to FSM data in the national pupil database to identify any pupil who has been eligible for FSM at some point in the last six years.
	IDACI	Number of pupils whose postcode falls in a lower super output area captured by the IDACI bands. Data from the October census is matched to the IDACI dataset, which is published by the Department for Communities and Local Government every five years (and is a subset of the indices of multiple deprivation).
	Low prior attainment	Data on the number of pupils who failed to reach the expected standard in the early years foundation stage profile or at key stage 2 tests, matched to the October census via the national pupil database.
	English as an additional language	Pupils recorded as EAL in the October school census, on the basis of parental declaration – data is matched to the preceding 3 years' October census data for the EAL3 measure.

School costs	Lump sum	Data on schools that are open at the beginning of the financial year, or will open during the financial year, as recorded in the authority proforma tool.
	Sparsity	Year group size: total number on roll in reception to year 11, divided by number of year groups present. Distance: derived from pupil postcodes in October school census.
	Business Rates	Historic data on actual spend taken from the authority proforma tool.
	Split sites	Historic data on actual spend taken from the authority proforma tool.
	PFI	Historic data on actual spend taken from the authority proforma tool.
	Exceptional premises circumstances	Historic data on actual spend taken from the authority proforma tool.
	Growth	Amount held by the local authority in their growth fund and falling rolls fund in the previous year. Change in pupil numbers between October census and authority proforma tool submission.
Geographic costs	Area cost adjustment	General labour market data published by the DCLG. If hybrid ACA: school workforce census data to calculate notional teacher salaries and DCLG's GLM data for non-teaching staff costs; data on school spending to determine the proportion of staffing costs attributable to teaching and non-teaching expenditure.

Schools National Funding Formula Consultation Questions:

1. Do you agree with our [the EFA] proposed principles for the funding system?
2. Do you agree with our [the EFA] proposal to move to a school-level national funding formula in 2019-20, removing the requirement for local authorities to set a local formula?
3. Do you agree that the basic amount of funding for each pupil should be different at primary, key stage 3 and key stage 4?
4. Do you agree that we should include a deprivation factor?
Which measures for the deprivation factor do you support?
Pupil-level only (current FSM and Ever6 FSM)
Area-level only (IDACI)
Pupil- and area-level
5. Do you agree we should include a low prior attainment factor?
6. Do you agree that we should include a factor for English as an additional language?
Do you agree that we should use the EAL3 indicator (pupils registered at any point during the previous 3 years as having English as an additional language)?
7. Do you agree that we should include a lump sum factor?
8. Do you agree that we should include a sparsity factor?
9. Do you agree that we should include a business rates factor?
10. Do you agree that we should include a split sites factor?
11. Do you agree that we should include a private finance initiative factor?
12. Do you agree that we should include an exceptional premises circumstances factor?
13. Do you agree that we should allocate funding to local authorities in 2017-18 and 2018-19 based on historic spend for these factors?
Business rates
Split sites
Private finance initiatives
Other exceptional circumstances
14. Do you agree that we should include a growth factor?
15. Do you agree that we should allocate funding for growth to local authorities in 2017-18 and 2018-19 based on historic spend?

16. Do you agree that we should include an area cost adjustment?
Which methodology for the area cost adjustment do you support?
general labour market methodology hybrid methodology
17. Do you agree that we should target support for looked-after children and those who have left care via adoption, special guardianship or a care arrangements order through the pupil premium plus, rather than include a looked-after children factor in the national funding formula?
18. Do you agree that we should not include a factor for mobility?
19. Do you agree that we should remove the post-16 factor from 2017-18?
20. Do you agree with our proposal to require local authorities to distribute all of their schools block allocation to schools from 2017-18?
21. Do you believe that it would be helpful for local areas to have flexibility to set a local minimum funding guarantee?
22. Do you agree that we should fund local authorities' ongoing responsibilities as set out in the consultation according to a per-pupil formula?
23. Do you agree that we should fund local authorities' ongoing historic commitments based on case-specific information to be collected from local authorities?
24. Are there other duties funded from the education services grant that could be removed from the system?
25. Do you agree with our proposal to allow local authorities to retain some of their maintained schools' DSG centrally – in agreement with the maintained schools in the schools forum – to fund the duties they carry out for maintained schools?

High Needs funding formula and other reforms Consultation Questions:

1. Do you agree with our [the EFA] proposed principles for the funding system?
2. Do you agree that the majority of high needs funding should be distributed to local authorities rather than directly to schools and other institutions?
3. Do you agree that the high needs formula should be based on proxy measures of need, not the assessed needs of children and young people?
4. Do you agree with the basic factors proposed for a new high needs formula to distribute funding to local authorities?
5. We [the EFA] are not proposing to make any changes to the distribution of funding for hospital education, but welcome views as we continue working with representatives of this sector on the way forward.
6. Which methodology for the area cost adjustment do you support?
7. Do you agree that we should include a proportion of 2016-17 spending in the formula allocations of funding for high needs?
8. Do you agree with our proposal to protect local authorities' high needs funding through an overall minimum funding guarantee?
9. Given the importance of schools' decisions about what kind of support is most appropriate for their pupils with SEN, working in partnership with parents, we welcome views on what should be covered in any national guidelines on what schools offer for their pupils with SEN and disabilities.
10. We are proposing that mainstream schools with special units receive per pupil amounts based on a pupil count that includes pupils in the units, plus funding of £6,000 for each of the places in the unit, rather than £10,000 per place. Do you agree with the proposed change to the funding of special units in mainstream schools?
11. We therefore welcome, in response to this consultation, examples of local authorities that are using centrally retained funding in a strategic way to overcome barriers to integration and inclusion. We would be particularly interested in examples of where this funding has been allocated on an "invest-to-save" basis, achieving reductions in high needs spending over the longer term. We would like to publish any good examples received.
12. We welcome examples of where centrally retained funding is used to support schools that are particularly inclusive and have a high proportion of pupils with particular types of SEN, or a disproportionate number of pupils with high needs.
13. Do you agree that independent special schools should be given the opportunity

to receive place funding directly from the EFA with the balance in the form of top-up funding from local authorities?

14. We welcome views on the outline and principles of the proposed changes to post-16 place funding (noting that the intended approach for post-16 mainstream institutions which have smaller proportions or numbers of students with high needs, differs from the approach for this with larger proportions or numbers), and on how specialist provision in FE colleges might be identified and designated.

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 22 June 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision

SUBJECT: Halton Schools Forum Membership Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Schools Forum on its current membership and recruitment activity. Attached at appendix 1 is the current composition of the Schools Forum.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

Schools Forum notes the update.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Two vacancies exist in the following sectors:

- Primary Representative (small school); and
- Primary Academy Representative

Officers are presently recruiting for these sectors and will advise the Forum when they are filled.

The Schools Forum currently has three non-school members comprising two from the PVI sector and one from 16-19 education provision.

Good practice states that the Forum must consider inviting Diocesan representation before considering any other groups from the non-schools members.

An email was sent to each Diocese on 7 April 2016, inviting them to nominate a volunteer/s to join the Forum:

- Liverpool Archdiocese;
- Chester Diocese;
- Shrewsbury Diocese; and
- Liverpool Diocese.

To date the Liverpool Diocese has made contact to say they hoped to be in touch following consultations with the other Dioceses.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

If no Diocesan representation comes forward then participation would be encouraged at intervals throughout the year. In the meantime it is noted that faith schools are represented on the Forum in both the Primary and Secondary sectors.

If the Primary vacancies (above) cannot be filled from within their sectors, then the LA will seek to appoint them.

5.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
EFA - Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide	HBC Office	Ann Jones
EFA – Schools Forum Structure	HBC Office	Ann Jones

SCHOOLS FORUM COMPOSITION 2016-17

	Name	Representing	Term of Office	How Elected	
Community	Secondary	Deborah Burke	Secondary with 6th Form	Jan 2015 - 2019	Succeeded previous member
		Jim Wilson	Secondary Governor Representative	June 2013 - 2017	LA appointed
		Janette Vincent	All Through School Representatiave	Oct 2015 - 2019	Only provider
	Primary	Jackie Coughlan	Primary - Infant Schools	Jan 2014 - 2018	Re-elected
		Richard Collings	Primary - Junior Schools	July 2013 - 2017	LA appointed
		Karl Lundrum	Primary - VA Schools	June 2013 - 2017	LA appointed
		Syd Broxton	Primary Governor - 1 Form Entry	March 2015 - 2019	Re-appointed
		Lesley Feakes	Primary School with a Nursery Unit	Jan 2015 - 2019	Re-appointed
		Vacant	Primary - Small Schools		
	Amanda Brown	Nursery Schools	June 2013 - 2017	Elected by Nursery Schools	
Academies	Secondary	John Rigby (Chair)	Secondary Academy	June 2015 - 2019	Re-appointed
		Leslie Davies	Secondary Academy Governor Representative	Oct 2015 - 2019	LA appointed
		Ian Kirkham	Secondary Academy	Nove 2015 - 2019	LA appointed
	Primary	Vacant	Primary Academy		
Special Schools	Marjorie Constantine	Special Schools	March 2015 - 2019	Re-appointed	
Pupil Referral Unit	Nigel Hunt	PRU	Sept 2014 - 2018	Only Provider	
Non School	Thalia Bell	16-19 Education Provision	Sept 2015 - 2019	Only provider	
	Kathryn Albiston	Early Years PVI	June 2015 - 2019	Elected by PVI Group	
	Jane O'Connor	Early Years PVI	June 2015- 2019	Elected by PVI Group	

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 22 June 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director - Education, Inclusion and Provision

SUBJECT: Presentation – Review of Funding for Special Educational Needs and Disability

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to receive a presentation on the proposed review of funding for special educational needs and disability.

RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Members receive the presentation; and**
- (2) Consider the arrangements for representation and participation within the review.**

2.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 To ensure that we are able to efficiently and effectively use our local resources to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities a review is to be undertaken of all funding and provision.
- 2.2 The presentation will summarise the current provision available and outline the proposed scope of the review.
- 2.3 Views will be sought on participation and engagement within the review.
- 2.4 Consideration will need to be given to the proposed changes to the funding of primary and secondary schools through the National Funding Formula and revisions to the allocation of High Needs Funding.

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 22 June 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn 2015-16

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report to the School Forum the final Dedicated Schools Grant position for 2015-16 and note the amount of DSG carried forward into the 2016-17 financial year.

2.0 **RECOMMENDED: That the amount of unspent DSG from 2015-16 of £1,584,474 is carried forward into the 2016-17 financial year be noted by the School Forum.**

3.0 Background

Each year all local authorities are required to submit a Section 251 Outturn return to the Department for Education. The authority records its total income and expenditure for the previous financial year (2015-16). This includes income and expenditure at individual school level, taken from the Consistent Financial Reporting return plus central local authority income and expenditure.

3.1 The DSG available for distribution in 2015-16 totalled £80.1M as below:

Final allocation of DSG for 2015-16	£77.5M
Plus unspent DSG from 2014-15 carried forward	<u>£ 2.6M</u>
Total DSG available in 2015-16	£80.1M

3.2 The DSG expenditure in 2015-16 totalled £78.4M as below:

Actual DSG School level expenditure	£66.4M
Actual DSG Central expenditure	<u>£12.1M</u>
Total DSG expenditure in 2015-16	£78.5M

3.3 The unspent DSG from 2015-16 brought forward into 2016-17 is therefore £1.6M as below:

Total DSG available in 2015-16	£80.1M
Total DSG expenditure in 2015-16	<u>£78.5M</u>
Total DSG brought forward into 2016-17	£ 1.6M

3.4 The centrally held DSG budgets were overspent by £1.1M in 2015-16. The main overspends were on funding to the PVI sector (£0.33M) and top-up funding (£1.94M). There were underspends totalling £1.17M in other areas

which reduced the overspend to £1.1M. The remaining funds brought forward will be used to fund budget pressures in the current 2016-17 financial year.

Regular monitoring meetings will continue to be held over the course of the year to identify areas of concern and in order to put in place ways of minimising the overspends during the year.

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 22 June 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: School Balances 2015-16

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report to the School Forum the level of balances brought forward from 2015-16 by Halton Schools.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

1) the report be noted; and

2) Schools Forum notes the responses from schools which have balances in excess of 8% (5% for secondary schools) as to why their balances are so high.

3.0 Background

3.1 Following discussion at the School Forum meeting in January 2013, the excess surplus balance limits previously imposed on schools were lifted for 2012-13 and has continued up to 2015-16. However the balances were still to be monitored.

3.2 The level of balances in the Individual School Budget held by Halton Schools brought forward into 2016-17 is £6,423,377. This is a decrease of £1,028,374 to the balance carried forward into 2015-16 of £7,451,751.

3.3 It should be noted that the Primary sector balances have decreased by £287,331 from £5,138,794 to £4,851,463 over the year. During the year one Primary school has converted to Academy. Out of the 45 maintained primaries, 25 have balances that exceed the former excess surplus balance limit of 8% and five of those 25 have balances in excess of 16%, double the former excess surplus balance limit.

At the end of 2015/2016, Nursery school balances increased by £5,629 from £93,948 to £99,577.

Overall the secondary school sector balance has decreased by £759,036 from £1,557,208 to £798,172. The three Secondary schools have all seen a reduction in their carry forward balances from the previous year of £310,000, £29,000 and £566,000.

For special schools, two schools have balances in excess of £250,000 (14.21% and 13.42%). The overall sector balance has decreased by £42,827 from £671,525 to £628,699.

- 3.4 Given the increasing pressures on the Dedicated Schools Budget as a whole, it was agreed at Schools Forum in June 2015 that schools with balances above the former excess surplus balance limit are requested to provide an explanation as to how they plan to spend this high balance. At the time of writing this report, we have prepared the pro-formas for the relevant schools to complete on their return from half-term. These will be circulated to Schools Forum members once they are all returned.
- 3.5 Appendix A details the Individual School Budget balances with comparison to the previous year. Schools which have balances above the former excess surplus balance limit are highlighted.
- 3.6 A total of £266,416 Non-LMS funds were carried forward into 2015-16 by schools. This balance has increased by £17,876 to give a balance of £284,292 to be carried forward into 2016-17.
- 3.7 Appendix B details the Non-LMS (Devolved Formula Capital) balances brought forward into 2016-17.

Appendix A

Code	School	2014-16				2015-16			
		Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%	Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%
5001	Ditton Nursery	283,796	276,557	7,239	2.55%	274,447	252,895	21,552	7.85%
5002	Birchfield Nursery	389,084	350,124	38,960	10.01%	417,827	365,427	52,400	12.54%
5003	Warrington Road Nursery	465,478	417,729	47,749	10.26%	416,313	390,688	25,625	6.16%
Sub-total Nursery Schools		1,138,358	1,044,410	93,948	8.25%	1,108,587	1,009,010	99,577	8.98%
5100	St Mary's Primary	1,202,772	986,322	216,450	18.00%	1,358,872	1,062,039	296,833	21.84%
5101	St Edwards Primary	719,428	618,244	101,184	14.06%	771,510	635,274	136,236	17.66%
5102	Weston Point Community Primary	934,499	773,227	161,272	17.26%	1,074,244	872,295	201,949	18.80%
5105	Victoria Road Primary	1,210,239	1,044,211	166,028	13.72%	1,263,659	1,136,267	127,392	10.08%
5106	Weston Primary	765,420	661,129	104,291	13.63%	894,829	789,692	105,137	11.75%
5107	St Clements Primary	824,535	794,609	29,926	3.63%	847,854	798,181	49,673	5.86%
5108	Westfield Primary	919,185	903,821	15,364	1.67%	959,696	950,277	9,419	0.98%
5109	Halton Lodge Primary	1,195,493	1,077,528	117,965	9.87%	1,229,263	1,095,655	133,608	10.87%
5110	Castle View Primary	949,649	825,932	123,717	13.03%	961,102	849,264	111,838	11.64%
5111	Astmoor Primary	957,792	863,317	94,475	9.86%	925,906	891,909	33,997	3.67%
5112	The Brow Community Primary	1,146,358	1,065,538	80,820	7.05%	1,219,671	1,113,519	106,152	8.70%
5113	Woodside Primary	1,126,414	1,044,094	82,320	7.31%	1,163,622	1,066,301	97,321	8.36%
5114	The Holy Spirit Primary	685,002	619,156	65,846	9.61%	758,177	684,340	73,837	9.74%
5116	Pewithall Primary	868,444	816,185	52,259	6.02%	874,146	780,570	93,576	10.70%
5118	Hallwood Park Primary	874,367	789,582	84,785	9.70%	1,095,103	937,497	157,606	14.39%
5119	St Augustine's Primary	630,516	622,954	7,562	1.20%	0	0	0	0.00%
5120	Runcorn All Saints Primary	696,348	565,783	130,565	18.75%	732,533	685,880	46,653	6.37%
5121	Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Primary	1,035,584	820,720	214,864	20.75%	1,135,544	894,274	241,270	21.25%
5122	Hillview Primary	903,922	759,093	144,829	16.02%	1,006,091	866,295	139,796	13.89%
5123	Beechwood Primary	666,788	579,207	87,581	13.13%	716,442	642,683	73,759	10.30%
5125	Brookvale Primary	1,597,404	1,296,119	301,285	18.86%	1,761,418	1,507,664	253,754	14.41%
5126	St Martins Primary	973,045	953,828	19,217	1.97%	1,028,546	987,411	41,135	4.00%
5127	Murdishaw West Comm Primary	1,119,683	1,032,708	86,975	7.77%	1,127,683	1,049,213	78,470	6.96%
5128	Gorsewood Primary	1,161,706	969,615	192,091	16.54%	1,285,297	1,095,914	189,383	14.73%
5129	St Berteline's Primary	1,195,420	1,083,306	112,114	9.38%	1,288,627	1,210,807	77,820	6.04%
5130	Windmill Hill Primary	844,024	784,891	59,133	7.01%	857,206	827,712	29,493	3.44%
5131	Daresbury Primary	530,192	511,148	19,044	3.59%	610,109	585,503	24,606	4.03%
5132	Moore Primary	813,090	781,042	32,048	3.94%	867,758	810,037	57,721	6.65%
5133	Hale Primary	708,636	632,680	75,956	10.72%	753,425	685,803	67,622	8.98%
5134	St Bedes Junior	1,126,459	1,048,505	77,954	6.92%	1,237,226	1,124,181	113,045	9.14%
5135	St Bedes Infant	1,019,925	917,107	102,818	10.08%	1,186,198	1,033,126	153,072	12.90%
5136	Spinney Avenue Primary	930,943	903,978	26,965	2.90%	919,039	890,672	48,006	5.22%
5137	St Michael's Primary	1,226,671	1,080,226	146,445	11.94%	1,299,719	1,201,740	97,979	7.54%
5138	Farnworth Primary	1,348,679	1,305,257	43,422	3.22%	1,449,681	1,384,727	64,954	4.48%

Appendix A

Code	School	2014-16				2015-16			
		Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%	Approved Budget £	Amount £	Balance £	%
5139	Halebank Primary	604,815	514,469	90,346	14.94%	639,776	542,792	96,984	15.16%
5140	St Gerard's Primary & Nursery	1,223,917	1,028,639	195,278	15.96%	1,307,143	1,067,356	239,788	18.34%
5141	Ditton Primary	1,703,118	1,635,189	67,929	3.99%	1,887,323	1,793,799	93,524	4.96%
5142	Simms Cross Primary	1,502,064	1,281,066	220,998	14.71%	1,576,867	1,376,900	199,967	12.68%
5144	Oakfield Primary	1,922,117	1,728,871	193,246	10.05%	1,870,052	1,785,915	84,137	4.50%
5146	Moorfield Primary	1,103,532	1,060,076	43,456	3.94%	1,194,854	1,175,403	19,451	1.63%
5148	Our Lady Of Perpetual Succour Primary	856,721	795,139	61,582	7.19%	902,011	831,819	70,192	7.78%
5149	St Basils Primary	1,719,409	1,653,725	65,684	3.82%	1,757,012	1,742,738	14,274	0.81%
5150	All Saints Upton Primary	1,082,093	1,061,726	20,367	1.88%	1,041,809	1,055,724	-13,915	-1.34%
5151	Fairfield Primary	2,716,835	2,195,329	521,506	19.20%	2,788,602	2,528,357	260,245	9.33%
5153	Lunts Heath Primary	1,285,021	1,147,219	137,802	10.72%	1,355,283	1,287,796	67,487	4.98%
5154	St John Fisher Primary	1,116,179	982,875	133,304	11.94%	1,221,016	1,034,796	186,220	15.25%
Sub-total Primary Schools		49,744,452	42,237,591	5,129,069	10.31%	52,201,943	44,800,510	4,851,463	9.29%
5301	St Chads High	7,005,333	6,564,569	440,765	6.29%	6,951,298	6,820,066	131,232	1.89%
5303	The Grange All Through	7,376,616	7,124,101	252,515	3.42%	6,925,109	6,701,546	223,563	3.23%
5312	St Peter & Paul High	9,255,368	8,456,075	799,293	8.64%	9,038,220	8,805,106	233,114	2.58%
5313	The Bridge PRU	1,278,472	1,213,837	64,635	5.06%	1,373,533	1,163,267	210,266	15.31%
Sub-total Secondary Schools		24,915,789	23,358,581	1,557,209	6.25%	24,288,160	23,489,986	798,174	3.29%
5401	Ashley	1,872,846	1,782,473	90,373	4.83%	1,914,601	1,815,163	99,438	5.19%
5402	Chesnut Lodge Special	1,755,087	1,486,490	268,597	15.30%	1,797,619	1,542,196	255,423	14.21%
5403	Brookfields	1,787,513	1,474,958	312,555	17.49%	2,040,254	1,766,417	273,837	13.42%
Sub-total Special Schools		5,415,446	4,743,921	671,525	12.40%	5,752,474	5,123,776	628,699	10.93%
Total - All Schools		81,214,044	71,384,501	7,451,751	9.18%	83,351,164	74,423,282	6,377,913	7.65%

Appendix B

Non-LMS School Balances 2014-15 to 2015-16

	2014-15	2015-16
5502 Weston Point Community Primary	2,720.00	8,306.00
5505 Victoria Road Primary	10,042.00	6,979.40
5506 Weston Primary	10,614.00	1,134.34
5508 Westfield Primary	0.00	5,766.00
5509 Halton Lodge Primary	3,555.00	9,861.00
5510 Castle View Primary	15,725.00	15,807.00
5511 Astmoor Primary	2,802.00	5,615.00
5512 The Brow Community Primary	2,182.00	8,207.00
5513 Woodside Primary	9,801.00	10,647.47
5516 Pewithall Primary	5,556.00	10,134.70
5518 Hallwood Park Primary	(195.00)	2,640.00
5522 Hillview Primary	12,767.00	12,456.00
5523 Beechwood Primary	5,508.00	8,217.00
5525 Brookvale Primary	6,462.00	10,001.00
5527 Murdishaw West Comm Primary	7,997.00	0.00
5528 Gorsewood Primary	4,297.00	9,273.00
5530 Windmill Hill Primary	13.00	5,476.00
5531 Daresbury Primary	2,625.00	7,806.00
5532 Moore Primary	0.00	3,164.00
5533 Hale Primary	5,275.00	4,052.06
5536 Spinney Avenue Primary	15,489.00	1,686.86
5538 Farnworth Primary	1,843.00	1,650.20
5539 Halebank Primary	9,687.00	9,721.00
5541 Ditton Primary	8,617.00	15,684.00
5542 Simms Cross Primary	3,244.00	6,495.00
5544 Oakfield Primary	13,096.00	14,699.00
5546 Moorfield Primary	(3,423.00)	568.69
5550 All Saints Upton Primary	4,093.00	(0.20)
5551 Fairfield Primary	34,023.00	35,940.00
5552 Fairfield Infants	0.00	0.00
5553 Lunts Heath Primary	7,229.00	3,535.03
Sub-total Primary Schools	201,644.00	235,522.55
5591 Ditton Nursery	6,837.00	5,094.63
5592 Birchfield Nursery	3,558.00	8,287.00
5593 Warrington Road Nursery	14,382.00	9,509.00
Sub-total Nursery Schools	24,777.00	22,890.63
5563 The Grange All Through	0.00	0.00
5595 The Bridge PRU	3,291.00	5,607.82
Sub-total Secondary Schools	3,291.00	5,607.82
5581 Ashley	9,101.00	(3,148.00)
5582 Chestnut Lodge Special	14,082.00	17,189.00
5583 Brookfields	8,021.00	6,230.00
Sub-total Special Schools	31,204.00	20,271.00
Total - All Schools	260,916.00	284,292.00

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 22 June 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Senior Finance Officer, Financial Management Division

SUBJECT: National Funding Formula consultations

1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To report to the School Forum an update on the consultations in respect of the Schools National Funding Formula, the High Needs Funding Formula and Other Reforms and the Early Years National Funding Formula.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Background

The Department for Education announced on 7th March the Stage one consultation on the Schools National Funding Formula and the High Needs Funding Formula and Other Reforms, with a deadline for responses of Sunday 17th April. Due to the Easter bank holidays and the Spring Break we had only 18 school days to circulate the consultation documents and produce a response from Schools Forum.

A meeting was held on 30th March with representatives of Schools Forum and a response was drafted. This was circulated to all Schools Forum members and submitted to the EFA on 14th April.

Schools National Funding Formula consultation and response

Attached is the Stage one consultation document with Schools Forum responses.

High Needs Funding Formula and Other Reforms consultation and response

Attached is the Stage one consultation document with Schools Forum responses.

Current position

There has been limited information released by the DfE following the Stage one consultations, in no minor part due to the 'period of sensitivity' for the European Referendum on 23rd June. The DfE have stated that they are "acutely aware" of the timescales and the impact of the school summer holidays on the consultation on this key part of the National

Funding Formula. The DfE have also stated that the Stage two consultations will have a suitable length of time, but have not yet given any indication of what this will be.

An analysis of the Stage one consultations has been completed but not published. The Secretary of State for Education said on 6th May that there will be a Sparsity factor and it will benefit around 1,200 small rural schools. This may impact on the total funding available for other schools due to the low take up of this factor by LA's.

The DfE seem keen to allocate funding for the PFI factor on a historical basis. This will cause problems to such schools and academies as the PFI costs increase on a year-by-year basis so to fund on a historical basis will cause added financial pressures. LA rates and Pupil Growth funding are also likely to be funded on a historical basis with similar effect.

The Early Years National Funding Formula is likely to be published at the same time as the Stage two consultation of the Schools National Funding Formula and High Needs Block funding formula but again, there has been no confirmation of this.

As soon as we hear anything regarding schools funding we will forward it to all schools as quickly as possible.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

5.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None

Schools national funding formula – Government consultation Stage One

Question 1

Do you agree with our proposed principles for the funding system?

We agree with the funding principles, however, as the details will not be provided until the second part of the consultation it remains to be seen whether the proposals align to these principles. It is also important if the system is to be considered fair that all schools and authorities are funded at a level which will ensure they are sustainable and can undertake their respective roles.

Would it be better to look to realign funding in 2022 instead of 2019/2020 in line with the academisation agenda?

Separating and ring fencing the schools block from the high needs block will further reduce flexibility and support for pupils with additional needs, and may ultimately prove more costly and militate against the inclusion agenda.

To prevent disruption to pupils and staff and to ensure the future funding system is efficient, the pace of change needs to be reviewed and extended.

We are concerned that the consultation for Stage one was so short and crossed both Easter and school holidays and has restricted the opportunities for seeking the views of schools and other key partners.

Question 2

Do you agree with our proposal to move to a school-level national funding formula in 2019-20, removing the requirement for local authorities to set a local formula?

Given the restriction on the number of factors the LA can use currently to fund schools and the proposal for all schools to become academies this would appear to be the most sustainable option. However, given the financial challenges schools already face and the prospect of turbulence with the introduction of the new national funding formula we ask that the timescale for implementation is reviewed and extended

Question 3

Do you agree that the basic amount of funding for each pupil should be different at primary, key stage 3 and key stage 4?

Although we agree in principle we feel that further consideration needs to be given to small schools with high attainment and low or no deprivation. Basic per pupil funding should be set at a level which will be sufficient to fund the education of a child without additional needs.

Question 4

a) Do you agree that we should include a deprivation factor?

b) Which measures for the deprivation factor do you support?

- Pupil-level only (current FSM and Ever6 FSM)
- Area-level only (IDACI)
- Pupil- and area-level

- (a) Yes we agree that there should be a funding factor for deprivation
- (b) We support the use of both FSM6 and IDACI. We would not support the use of FSM as there has been a reduction in FSM numbers since the introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meals. Changes to the benefit system may also impact on numbers eligible to FSM

Question 5

Do you agree we should include a low prior attainment factor?

Yes we agree that there would be a low prior attainment factor

Question 6

a) Do you agree that we should include a factor for English as an additional language?

b) Do you agree that we should use the EAL3 indicator (pupils registered at any point during the previous 3 years as having English as an additional language)?

(a) Yes we agree with we should include a factor for English as an additional language

(b) Yes we agree that we should use the EAL3 indicator

Question 7

Do you agree that we should include a lump sum factor?

Yes we agree to a lump sum as this provides some stability and protection for all schools, particularly the smaller schools.

Question 8

Do you agree that we should include a sparsity factor?

No we do not support this factor. It is not a factor we would support but suggest that it is taken into consideration when determining the level of lump sum as mentioned in Question 7

Question 9

Do you agree that we should include a business rates factor?

Yes we support a business rates factor and this should cover the costs. An annual review would need to be undertaken to ensure there is sufficient funding to cover any business rates reviews which are looked at frequently.

Question 10

Do you agree that we should include a split sites factor?

Yes we support a split site factor. This would need to be allocated on a fixed term basis following a re-organisation.

Question 11

Do you agree that we should include a private finance initiative factor?

Yes we support a PFI factor. This factor would need to be reviewed annually and would need to be sufficient to cover the costs of the contractual obligations in full. Without this schools with PFI arrangements will be disadvantaged and in some cases may no longer be financially viable. Each PFI school within every LA has a different arrangement for meeting the costs of which they are tied into long contractual agreements.

Question 12

Do you agree that we should include an exceptional premises circumstances factor?

Yes we would support an exceptional premises factor which could cover costs such as joint use arrangements.

Question 13

Do you agree that we should allocate funding to local authorities in 2017-18 and 2018-19 based on historic spend for these factors?

- **Business rates**
- **Split sites**
- **Private finance initiatives**
- **Other exceptional circumstances**

No we do not support basing these allocations on historic spend on the above factors

Business rates would need to be based on costs and reviewed annually

PFI would need to be based on costs and reviewed annually. Please refer to our response to Question 11.

Question 14

Do you agree that we should include a growth factor?

No we do not support this factor. Often the schools that need the most support are those schools where the numbers are declining. In order to fund a growth factor great care must be taken to ensure that it is not at the detriment of all schools, for the benefit of a small number.

Question 15

Do you agree that we should allocate funding for growth to local authorities in 2017-18 and 2018-19 based on historic spend?

No we do not support this factor – funding for growth benefits a few schools to the detriment of others. Please refer to our response to Question 14.

Question 16

a) Do you agree that we should include an area cost adjustment?

b) Which methodology for the area cost adjustment do you support?

- **general labour market methodology**
- **hybrid methodology**

- (a) Yes
(b) Hybrid

The hybrid model is supported provided it takes into consideration other regional costs such as the excessive cost of water in the North West region.

The unfairness exists because under current law, regional water companies can develop distinctly different water charging tariffs. The North West's water company, United Utilities, introduced a method of charging called "site area charging" and stands at a particularly high rate compared to other regions. These differences are unavoidable for schools in the North West of England because the water market is closed to competition. Even with the water market opening up to competition in 2017, the wholesale charges and tariffs will still be unavoidable. Partial deregulation in 2017 is expected to only allow some competition and will not affect these charges.

The data highlights that each year, the North West spends around £16 million more of its schools budgets on water and sewerage charges when compared to the South East despite having almost identical numbers of pupils and schools.

Question 17

Do you agree that we should target support for looked-after children and those who have left care via adoption, special guardianship or a care arrangements order through the pupil premium plus, rather than include a looked-after children factor in the national funding formula?

Yes we support this proposal as it provides a more consistent, transparent approach which can be monitored through the Virtual Headteacher.

Question 18

Do you agree that we should not include a factor for mobility?

Yes we agree that the mobility factor should be removed. This is not a factor that has been used in Halton

Question 19

Do you agree that we should remove the post-16 factor from 2017-18?

Yes we agree that the post-16 factor should be removed. This is not a factor that has been used in Halton.

Question 20

Do you agree with our proposal to require local authorities to distribute all of their schools block allocation to schools from 2017-18?

There are significant pressures on both the high needs and early years budgets – if the funding allocated for schools is distributed to them in total in 2017/2018 there would be insufficient funding to meet our budget requirements. We would therefore have to reduce the level of funding provided to early years settings which could impact on the sustainability of early years settings and reduce the funding spent on high needs such as special schools, specialist settings and the level of enhanced provision provided to all schools. If the funding provided to Halton is based on Halton's spend profile instead of the funding allocation to the LA this would reduce turbulence.

Question 21

Do you believe that it would be helpful for local areas to have flexibility to set a local minimum funding guarantee?

We agree that minimum funding guarantee should still continue at 1.5%

Question 22

Do you agree that we should fund local authorities' ongoing responsibilities as set out in the consultation according to a per-pupil formula?

No we do not support the proposal that the LAs ongoing responsibilities should be funded on a per pupil basis. This would have a significant impact on Halton as one of the smallest unitary authorities. Funding should be based on historic costs from 2020 and funding could be based on a lump sum plus per pupil allocation.

Question 23

Do you agree that we should fund local authorities' ongoing historic commitments based on case-specific information to be collected from local authorities?

Yes we support this approach

Question 24

Are there other duties funded from the education services grant that could be removed from the system?

No. The proposed funding system will have a significant impact on Halton as a small unitary authority and the funding distributed will be insufficient for the authority to continue to discharge its ongoing responsibilities.

The Local Authority will need sufficient funding to support the academy conversion process.

Question 25

Do you agree with our proposal to allow local authorities to retain some of their maintained schools' DSG centrally – in agreement with the maintained schools in the schools forum – to fund the duties they carry out for maintained schools?

Central DSG should be funded at a level which would allow the local authority to discharge its responsibilities without recourse to the School Forum. Our suggestion is that it is funded using the lump sum and per pupil amounts.

High needs funding formula and other reforms – Government consultation Stage One

Question 1

Do you agree with our proposed principles for the funding system?

There is concern that the scale, pace and the ambition to ensure that the funding allocation is simple will mean that the funding system will not be fair or efficient. LA's need to be able to minimize turbulence to schools whilst the changes are phased in and this may not be possible. The use of proxy indicators will mean that the allocation will not adequately take into consideration low incidence high cost provision.

Without seeing any modelling or details of the impact of the proposed changes it is difficult to assess whether it will meet any of the 7 principles.

The reduced timescale for responding and the timing of the consultation have made it very difficult to adequately consult with schools and other partners.

Question 2

Do you agree that the majority of high needs funding should be distributed to local authorities rather than directly to schools and other institutions?

Yes, so that the local authority and health partners can continue to commission education, health and care provision for 0-25 year old children and young people with SEN and disability in line with the SEN Reform.

Question 3

Do you agree that the high needs formula should be based on proxy measures of need, not the assessed needs of children and young people?

The high needs formula should be based on a combination of proxy indicators and historic costs – as a small authority Halton needs to ensure it has sufficient resources to meet the needs of all its pupils with high needs, in particular those with the most complex high cost needs. If the correct indicators are not used then it is likely that the allocations will not be fair and will not reflect need.

Question 4

Do you agree with the basic factors proposed for a new high needs formula to distribute funding to local authorities?

Yes, but the key concern in Halton is that as a small authority proxy indicators may not deliver sufficient funding to secure low incidence high cost provision.

Question 5

We are not proposing to make any changes to the distribution of funding for hospital education, but welcome views as we continue working with representatives of this sector on the way forward.

This proposal is supported on the basis that the distribution of funding is reviewed annually so that it is appropriately allocated. Halton is also concerned about the costs of independent hospital provision and would want this considered in future consultation.

Question 6

Which methodology for the area cost adjustment do you support?

Hybrid

The hybrid model is supported provided it takes into consideration other regional costs such as the excessive cost of water in the North West.

The unfairness exists because under current law, regional water companies can develop distinctly different water charging tariffs. The North West's water company, United Utilities, introduced a method of charging called "site area charging" and stands at a particularly high rate compared to other regions. These differences are unavoidable for schools in the North West of England because the water market is closed to competition. Even with the water market opening up to competition in 2017, the wholesale charges and tariffs will still be unavoidable. Partial deregulation in 2017 is expected to only allow some competition and not affect these charges.

The data highlights that each year, the North West spends around £16 million more of its

schools budgets on water and sewerage charges when compared to the South East despite having almost identical numbers of pupils and schools.

Question 7

Do you agree that we should include a proportion of 2016-17 spending in the formula allocations of funding for high needs?

Yes provided that the majority of funding is distributed on the basis of historical spend.

Question 8

Do you agree with our proposal to protect local authorities' high needs funding through an overall minimum funding guarantee?

Yes we support MFG but again it needs to be based on our actual spend and not on our allocated spend.

Question 9

Given the importance of schools' decisions about what kind of support is most appropriate for their pupils with SEN, working in partnership with parents, we welcome views on what should be covered in any national guidelines on what schools offer for their pupils with SEN and disabilities.

Schools will be responsible for the identification of need. This will involve teachers undertaking training to be able to identify and plan for need. For low incidence SEN Intervention schools should support pupils through Quality First Teaching and further differentiation.

Schools will be expected to fund additional advice and guidance e.g. educational psychologists and ensure parental and family involvement in addressing any identified need. Schools should also fund reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to their building and the curriculum.

Question 10

We are proposing that mainstream schools with special units receive per pupil amounts based on a pupil count that includes pupils in the units, plus funding of £6,000 for each of the places in the unit; rather than £10,000 per place. Do you agree with the proposed change to the funding of special units in mainstream schools?

No this proposal is not supported – the primary per pupil rate in Halton is less than £4,000 and therefore would reduce the funding available to the resource provision units.

Question 11

We therefore welcome, in response to this consultation, examples of local authorities that are using centrally retained funding in a strategic way to overcome barriers to integration and inclusion. We would be particularly interested in examples of where this funding has been allocated on an “invest-to-save” basis, achieving reductions in high needs spending over the longer term. We would like to publish any good examples received.

Many pupils with ASC were previously placed in expensive independent provision outside the borough. The redesignation of Ashley school with an extended age range has enabled the borough to meet the need of these pupils within their local community and to reduce costs. Ashley has now been recognised for its good practice nationally and internationally since its redesignation.

Question 12

We welcome examples of where centrally retained funding is used to support schools that are particularly inclusive and have a high proportion of pupils with particular types of SEN, or a disproportionate number of pupils with high needs.

Secondary aged pupils with a hearing impairment no longer wished to attend a specialist HI unit but requested provision within a mainstream setting with support. In consultation with the secondary HI academy we agreed to apply to remove the funding from the school and invest in a second specialist teacher to strengthen our support for pupils with HI across the borough.

Question 13

Do you agree that independent special schools should be given the opportunity to receive place funding directly from the EFA with the balance in the form of top-up funding from local authorities?

No this proposal is not supported

Question 14

We welcome views on the outline and principles of the proposed changes to post-16 place funding (noting that the intended approach for post-16 mainstream institutions which have smaller proportions or numbers of students with high needs, differs from the approach for those with larger proportions or numbers), and on how specialist provision in FE colleges might be identified and designated.

As there are a number providers with small numbers we do not consider that this proposal is appropriate it could however be applied to FE colleges.