

**Report to:** Schools Forum

**Date of Meeting(s):** 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017

**Subject:** School Funding Formula (SFF) 2017/18 – High Needs Block Budget Monitoring Report as at 31 August 2018.

**Report of:** James Winterbottom – Director Children and Families

**Contact Officer:** John McDonald Strategic Finance Manager

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**Summary:** To update Schools Forum on the High Needs Budget at period 5.

**Recommendation(s):** For Schools Forum to note the contents of the report

**Implications:**

*What are the **financial** implications?* n/a

*What are the **staffing** implications?* n/a

**Risks:** n/a

Please list any appendices:-

Appendix number or letter	Description
N/A	

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The allocation for Wigan with regard to the High Needs Block is £27.446m. This compares with the 2016/17 high needs block funding of £26.473m. This includes Post 16 Funding paid direct to institutions, resourced units and AP provision in academies. The estimated figure after these deductions is £23.531m.

## 2. 2017/18 Budget

2.1 As reported at the last meeting of Schools Forum the High Needs Block will be overspent for 2017/18. The projected position is detailed in the table below; Please note that due to the uncertainty of some of the areas this may increase.

<b>Financial Monitoring Report for Period 5 - August 2017</b>			
<b>Analysis by Divison: Assistant Director - Education</b>			
<b>Cost Centre &amp; Description</b>	<b>Full Year Original Budget</b>	<b>Projected Spend</b>	<b>Year End Projection</b>
Maintained Special Schools	12,996,233	13,492,614	496,381
Post 16 Provision	2,599,552	2,728,552	129,000
Independent School Provision	1,940,000	1,827,000	- 113,000
EHC plan support in schools	2,151,484	2,350,000	198,516
Alternative Provision - Pupil Referral Unit	962,277	965,452	3,175
Sensory Support Team	792,518	802,000	9,482
Targeted Educational Support Services	632,546	630,000	- 2,546
Other Support Services	606,861	606,861	-
Resourced Provision	412,925	444,925	32,000
Children in Care Team	172,143	172,143	-
Equipment	138,461	120,000	- 18,461
Disproportionate SEN in schools	100,000	105,000	5,000
Hospital Tuition	25,000	30,000	5,000
	<b>23,530,000</b>	<b>24,274,546</b>	<b>744,546</b>

### Maintained Special Schools

The increase in numbers and funding was discussed at the previous Forum. The local authority met with all special school Heads to negotiate on place funding. There was little movement on cost and we are committed to funding placements which will require an extra £0.5m. The main reasons for the increase are;

- Increase in numbers
- Inclusive Issues
- Parental choice
- Budget pressures within mainstream schools

### Post 16

Despite increasing the budget for this area we continue to see increased demand for high needs places across all our settings. We are experiencing high volumes of children being excluded from mainstream schools and therefore seeking placements in special schools. This has been a trend for over 12 months. We are now receiving many more Y11 referrals

for EHCP as young people move in to post 16 as families are becoming more aware of their right to request support. There have been 20 such requests in the last few months which is significant for the PfA hub. There are currently 8 students in independent specialist schools that would usually have left education at 16 but are now seeking education in that setting rather than move into social care. These are predominantly higher costs placements than our local provision.

The DfE are keen to promote supported Internships as a Pathway for young people with SEND. Due to this parents/carers and young people are requesting this opportunity which is also increasing the post 16 cohort. We also have a number of leavers from Wigan and Leigh college who now wish to take up an SI which has not been a consideration in the past. The number of young people accessing Post 16 provision has risen from 130 (2014/15) to 201 (2016/17)

## **Independent School Budget**

Although the budget is showing a projected underspend of £113k the demand for Independent Schools appears to be on the increase due to a number of reasons;

- capacity within our maintained special schools (e.g. Newbridge LC);
- the increase in placements breaking down within mainstream schools and to avoid permanent exclusions, referrals have been made to TTA (with there being no evidence of support/intervention overtime within the mainstream school);
- in some cases as TTA have been unable to offer support or feel unable to meet needs, children have been referred to maintained special schools, without any process evidence;
- following a period of time at TTA, some children have been referred to independent schools as integration to another mainstream school has been judged unsuitable and due to lack of capacity e.g. Newbridge;
- there appears to be an increase in number of children displaying communication and interaction difficulties, anxieties which appear to be on the increase (there appears to be a gap in provision for those higher function children who want specialist provision rather than resourced mainstream provision).

## **EHC Plans**

As a brief guide for the period September 2015 to August 2016, and from September 2016 to August 2017, the number of Plans had increased by 67%. In the last 3 months (June 2017 to August 2017) there have been 83 Plans prepared for consideration. The same time last year this number was 53. Schools are more aware of the process and are now encouraged to apply for EHC plans as a financial package may be attached.

## **Funding**

As the Schools Block and High Needs reserves have been fully utilised in 2016/17 Schools Forum need to discuss and agree how we address the overspend for 2017/18. At the last Forum we raised the possibility of asking schools for a contribution to meet the deficit. If schools feel they can't contribute we would need to consult with the ESFA and Secretary of State as the only option at present is to move funding from the Schools Block to High Needs.

## **3. National Update**

3.1 See later agenda item

**4. Conclusions**

4.1 Forum members to note the contents of the report

4.2 Forum members to agree on how the projected overspend is to be funded