

# Public Document Pack

## Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

### Bridgend County Borough Council



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#### **Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate**

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**Dyddiad/Date:** Tuesday, 6 July 2021

Dear Councillor,

#### **SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1**

A meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 will be held remotely - via Microsoft Teams on **Monday, 12 July 2021 at 14:30**.

#### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008 (including whipping declarations)
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 14  
To receive for approval the minutes of the meeting of 15 03 21
4. Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (ALNET) Act 2018 15 - 48  
Invitees:

Lindsay Harvey - Corporate Director – Education and Family Support  
Cllr Charles Smith - Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration  
Nicola Echanis - Head of Education and Family Support  
Michelle Hatcher - Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement  
Kate Clarke - Lead Communications and Relationships Team  
Rachel Garner - ALN Lead Early Years, Cognition & Learning & CMMI  
Kathryn Morgan - Principal Educational Psychologist

John Welch - Strategic Lead for Equity and Wellbeing - Central South Consortium

Francis Clegg - Acting Headteacher, Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School  
Ryan Davies - Headteacher, Brynteg School  
Christopher Jones - Headteacher Llangynwyd Primary School  
Helen Jones - Headteacher, Maesteg School  
Jonathan Lewis - Headteacher Coety Primary School

Rhea Quinn - Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator - Blaengarw Primary School  
Kate Sparkes - Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator - Maesteg Comprehensive School

5. Forward Work Programme Update 49 - 58

6. Urgent Items

To consider any item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: Please note: Due to the current requirement for social distancing this meeting will not be held at its usual location. This will be a virtual meeting and Members and Officers will be attending remotely. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact [cabinet\\_committee@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk) or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

Yours faithfully

**K Watson**

Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services

Councillors:

TH Beedle  
JPD Blundell  
RJ Collins  
PA Davies  
SK Dendy  
J Gebbie

Councillors

T Giffard  
CA Green  
DG Howells  
M Hughes  
M Jones  
KL Rowlands

Councillors

B Sedgbeer  
RME Stirman  
T Thomas  
JH Tildesley MBE

Registered Representatives

Tim Cahalane - Roman Catholic Church  
Rev. Canon Edward Evans - Church in Wales  
Ciaron Jackson – Primary School Sector  
Lynsey Morris – Secondary School Sector

# Agenda Item 3

## SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - MONDAY, 15 MARCH 2021

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY, 15 MARCH 2021 AT 14:30

#### Present

Councillor T Giffard – Chairperson

JPD Blundell  
AJ Williams  
TH Beedle

RJ Collins  
KJ Watts  
A Williams

J Gebbie  
PA Davies  
KL Rowlands

SK Dendy  
RME Stirman

#### Apologies for Absence

M Jones, B Sedgebeer and SE Baldwin  
L Morris, Registered Representative – Secondary School Sector.

#### Registered Representatives

Rev Canon Edward Evans          Church in Wales

#### Officers:

Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Tracy Watson	Scrutiny Officer
Nicola Echanis	Head of Education & Family Support
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support

#### Invitees:

Councillor Charles Smith          Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration

## 19.    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr JPD Blundell declared a personal interest in item 4 because he was a Community Governor at Cefn Glas Infants School.

Cllr TH Beedle declared a personal interest in item 4 because he was Chair of Bridgend Governors Association.

Rev. Canon E Evans, Registered Representative, Church in Wales, declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 because he was a Community Governor of Bryntirion Comprehensive School.

Cllr RJ Collins declared a personal interest in item 4 because he was a Community Governor of St Mary's and St Patrick's Roman Catholic School.

Cllr SK Dendy declared a personal interest in item 4 because she was Community Governor at Blaengarw Primary School.

Cllr AJ Williams declared a personal interest in item 4 because she had 2 children at Secondary Schools and 1 at Primary school within the County Borough who were all undertaking blended learning.

## 20.    APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 dated 7 December 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record.

21. BLENDED LEARNING IN BRIDGEND SCHOOLS SINCE MARCH 2020

The Principal Improvement Partner - Central South Consortium (CSC), Assistant Director for Curriculum – CSC, Group Manager School Improvement – Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Support and Digital Office Manager - BCBC gave a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of the report on Blended Learning in Bridgend Schools since March 2020.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for the presentation. Members asked the following questions:

A Member thanked all frontline staff and provided feedback from parents and carers in his constituency, which in the majority of cases, teachers had been incredibly supportive, in addition to great feedback about the use of Hwb and Google Classroom. The number one theme from the feedback they had received was that there appeared to be a degree of inconsistency with what some schools providing live virtual teaching and others offering worksheets or pre-recorded videos, whereas the parents had a preference for live lessons. He felt this was especially true for those that were less able with some parents stating that in some cases this could be quite isolating and demoralising. He asked Officers for their comments and how the approach could be altered to take this into account. He also asked how the approach in Bridgend differed to other areas of Wales.

The Group Manager (School Support) stated she was pleased to hear that there had been positive feedback and explained that there had been mixed views about live streaming. Teachers had also been learning, sometimes with their own children at home whilst presenting lessons, which was a challenge. There was continual learning, and there had been changes during the past year as practice was refined, so she was certainly aware of the inconsistency, which was a target area for improvement. Many teachers had been rapidly upskilled to deliver lessons in this way and this was a whole new area for many of them.

The Principal Improvement Partner, CSC, said he had listened to multiple schools across the region talking about their approach to blended learning, and it was so contextualised. There wasn't necessarily a Bridgend comparison to other local authorities. What one school was doing was often very different to another because it was so localised and this had been the guidance put to schools, about meeting the needs of learners, which was the key thing.

The Assistant Director for Curriculum, CSC explained that there wasn't any data at present but WG had commissioned research, which she hoped would be available soon. The roadmap was based on making decisions at every level for schools and at a moment in time, which was what the continuity of learning document was about. It was important to make clear the expectations and priorities of WG and for schools to then make decisions based on their learner needs. If feedback from parents was this is preferred, then picking, how and why, could enable that to happen. Schools that had more consistent approaches, may have changed or developed over time because of things that had changed in the system. There was no data to say percentages of schools were moving in that way, because it was so changeable. Many schools had tried live learning or piloted live learning since January, and this had been well received in certain

areas although some schools had backtracked. It seemed to be a moment in time for an individual school, depending on the feedback they received.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration thanked the Member and said it was important to get views from parents and students. It was important to remember that certain parts of Wales had a head start in terms of blended learning, which were already in the e-learning business because of their rural location. Inconsistency had been anticipated, as one of the jobs was to interpret the advice and regulations from WG at the very start of the pandemic, which had focused on safeguarding issues to start with, the unforeseen consequence of which was a reluctance to live stream. The revision to that WG advice over the summer had been welcome. It was important not to make assumptions, in respect of live lessons, but to look at research and best practice, which CSC had done. Cabinet had been concerned about consistency and whether recorded lessons were better than live learning. CSC had stated they weren't experts in blended learning, but were experts in getting the research together and as Chair of CSC he was pleasantly surprised by the work already done. In terms of the comparisons across Wales, there was only anecdotal evidence, with some counties well ahead, some looking at blended learning with some trepidation making assumptions that it couldn't be used with younger pupils and this needed to be clarified and worked on with schools in a professional way. The way forward was that there was going to be a lot of pedagogical learning and CPD needed among teaching staff and teaching techniques needed to be shared among colleagues.

The Member thanked Officers for their comprehensive answers. From his feedback, he had been told that in some cases there was absolutely no contact or welfare checks, particularly for those with additional learning needs (ALN). He recognised this might be an isolated incident but asked for Officers comments. In addition, was there any plan to introduce any catch up sessions with pupils or summer schools?

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support explained that supporting learners with ALN was a key area but it was fair to say that at the beginning schools had still been finding their feet. Feedback from some parents had indicated that they felt that the learning offer needed to be more bespoke and this had been discussed with schools, where informed, to arrange changing the techniques, delivery mechanisms and changing pedagogy, and feedback from parents was that this had improved significantly over time. It was important to be put in contact with parents to make sure their children had the best possible deal.

The Assistant Director for Curriculum, CSC explained that that alongside learning guidance there was guidance produced by WG on vulnerable learners including ALN's. The expectation was clear from WG that whatever additional provision or learning need that an individual learner required, that those were recognised by schools and catered for, and this included children who through this process and system may now have additional needs. It was about ensuring that provision was equitable and provision was excellent for all learners and that every child's needs were taken into account and any difficulties with barriers to learning were overcome in the best way possible at this moment in time.

The Group Manager (Learner Support) explained that by identifying vulnerable learners, teams had worked really closely with schools to identify those who would benefit from coming in to the school environment and this had happened throughout the process. Where children and young people had been educated at home, teams had responded in different ways e.g., the sensory service had visited outside homes and assessments had been held remotely, etc. Inclusion service had responded flexibly with schools and parents in order to meet the individual needs and then support had been adapted accordingly. Where additional support was needed for any learners, this had gone in,

with funding being utilised in different ways, to do that. In addition, the Inclusion Service had purchased chrome books for the learning resource centres to make sure that no learner was digitally excluded. The important thing was partnership and keeping an eye on those individual learners and meeting their needs where appropriate. That had been really key in keeping a temperature gauge on how they were being supported and schools had worked very closely with the teams. It was an ongoing process, which had improved, and if parents had come forward, the local authority had responded accordingly.

A Member explained from her own personal experience how fantastic teaching staff had been and she was pleased with the standard of work and realised what a balancing act it was for each household. She asked if BCBC had a common approach to measuring engagement from online learning from school to school. Whether there was any data from each school to identify the take up on blended learning and was there a comparison of schools? Also, whether there were any patterns where learners were eligible for free school meals (eFSM), that there was less take-up or was it just across the board? Lastly whether all of this was being used to improve provision?

The Principal Improvement Partner, CSC explained that in terms of measuring engagement, improvement partners had been asked to find out how schools were delivering blended learning at a couple of points. Engagement had taken place with Headteachers in June, just after coming out of lockdown and then November time, where it was very much hybrid, with pupils back in school. The trend in Bridgend Primary schools was that the range of engagement was quite wide, although figures were not available but could be shared retrospectively. In terms of engaging with home learning in primary schools, the range was somewhere in the region of about 32% to 90% engagement. Numbers of learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM) were generally higher in the primary sector with engagement a little lower. It was interesting how schools changed approaches to delivering home learning to try and increase engagement with learning and the knock on effect, since November. In the secondary sector, the range was a bit smaller in the region of about 50% to 70% engagement, again following a roughly similar pattern. In terms of the Welsh-medium sector in particular, both in primary and secondary, there was much higher engagement in the first lockdown period in home learning irrespective of eFSM backgrounds. This work had been carried out in order to understand engagement and how schools would use that information to change their practice.

The Assistant Director for Partnerships and Improvement, CSC stated that across the region there was a vast array of different types of engagement. Initially engagement was ensuring learners were able to access devices, were able to make contact, etc., and then later a move to seeing what the quality of engagement looked like and if the engagement was meaningful and lead to learning. Conversations moved around looking to the evidence of a quality engagement as opposed to saying that youngsters had logged on to the computer and were sitting there whilst not engaging with any of the learning or any of the lessons. Regionally there was a massive difference in how schools were able to support learners to actively engage. In terms of engagement with schools, it was constantly being aware of the challenges facing schools. It was too easy, when not in those positions, to start making judgements that were not necessarily accurate so it was about making sure CSC had meaningful contact with Headteachers and schools, to find out where they were so the support provided was appropriate and it wasn't going to cause any additional anxiety within a setting, but would add value.

The Member asked if BCBC had a clear vision for blended online learning that had been communicated to schools and was there a minimum expectation of what that looked like?

The Headteacher of Brynteg School stated that he felt there was a very clear vision for blended learning/remote teaching in Bridgend and that the quality of the remote teaching was definitely more important than how it was delivered. From the start, schools were given the flexibility to operate like that and that was why so many schools were operating in so many different ways. What was interesting was that the whole process had exposed teachers because many people were beginning to have lots and lots of input into how teaching and learning opportunities are designed, and perhaps quite rightly so. Maybe that was something to be picked-up as schools as an indication of the future in terms of self-evaluation. Many parents/carers and pupils were saying how they wanted to be taught. Sometimes the school didn't quite agree noting that teacher's being online for 5 hours a day simply wouldn't work. The vision from Bridgend and working with CSC was that it was about the quality. It didn't matter if this was done virtually or in-situ, what mattered most was whether or not what was being done was building on prior learning. Staff in Brynteg were expected to be there live in every lesson but that didn't mean they were sitting there on camera, they could be there, or thereabouts, answering queries online through the chat box, etc., but being live and running a live lesson didn't necessarily make that a brilliant lesson.

The Headteacher of Brackla Primary School stated that she agreed with her colleague and it was all about quality, explaining that the school delivered all pre-recorded materials because that was what the teachers felt confident with. The offer had evolved over the months, the pre-recorded lessons were absolutely fantastic, and the quality was far superior to what it had been. The school had worked closely with CSC who had been really supportive. The Team Bridgend approach had been a strength for Bridgend with officers listening to what schools had to say and engagement had increased over the months because of the quality that was on offer. Schools were working much more collaboratively and sharing good practice and the upskilling of staff had been phenomenal. The vision had been communicated very clearly but was very much on the basis of quality and what suited the context of a particular school.

The Headteacher of Pîl Primary School explained that the ICT Strategy Group was looking at development around a blended learning/policy, but had found it difficult because it was recognised that everyone was coming from a different starting point. It was agreed that the principles of blended learning were here to stay and it was about trying to look forward rather than back and how there could be seamless learning between home and school in the future. The strategy group acknowledged that a one size fits all approach was very difficult and it was more about developing support, which CSC and the local authority had done in supporting schools to try and get where they wanted to be. The group would continue to look at making a common approach but it was difficult due to every school being on its own individual journey.

The Member asked whether there had been a rise in the number of staff accessing the Care First wellbeing service as a result of pressures (e.g. marking work outside of their normal working day).

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support stated that HR colleagues were not present but the point around staff wellbeing was extremely important not just in respect of school staff but local authority officers and also colleagues from CSC. One of the challenges over the last year was maintaining a correct work life balance when it was not as easily delineated as it had previously, so this was an important point. The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support was minded to go back to HR to continue to provide expert up to date advice.

The Headteacher of Brackla Primary School explained that in terms of staff wellbeing there had been quite a lot of support in respect of Care First with weekly webinars on offer, on a variety of topics, which staff have tapped in to and had been a real positive.

There had also been termly wellbeing focus groups through Team Bridgend, so there was a lot of support on offer.

The Youth Mayor explained that she was a current Year 11 student who had returned to school today. As a student, she felt she hadn't seen much blended learning in her school and that it was either solely face-to-face, online or pre-recorded lessons. Many students she had talked to had seen schools doing blended learning, but she felt she was just being routed to one type of learning, so that had been difficult. In respect of the previous point, the Youth Council had discussed the point about inequalities of learning. Some students had a head start in their assessments, whereas others had not started them. She felt there were issues with communication and there had not been much information in relation to choosing A level subjects, which caused problems in respect of strict deadlines. She didn't feel there had been any inter-school communication about what different schools were doing, what had been tried and what had worked well. She appreciated that this had been a difficult year but asked what was being done to help stop the inequalities.

The Chairperson thanked the Youth Mayor for her contribution and said it was very helpful and a good insight to hear someone that was experiencing this every day.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration thanked the Youth Mayor for her contribution and stated that it was very important that teachers should see how things looked from the point of view of the customer. Historically there had been a tendency for teachers to self-evaluate in terms of how they performed, but feedback from students could indicate their perception was very different. He noted she had made 3 points in respect of blended learning, catch-ups/assessments and consistency. With regard to the first, the key was blended learning. There wasn't necessarily an answer that it was a particular method, but it should be a blended approach, so if that wasn't happening that was a concern and he was sure support staff and teaching staff there, would have a look at that. In terms of catch-up/assessments he wanted to reassure students that there was a sense in which they did not have to catch up and did not want students returning to school thinking they needed to cram in information. There needed to be a more enlightened approach and at the very top in Wales there was a very different philosophy with an expert panel of professionals looking at this in a more humane and more forward looking and realistic way. Hopefully this would be more reassuring when the deliberations of that panel were published. In respect of consistency, it was about encouraging teachers to become much more accomplished in the pedagogy or the teaching and learning approaches of blended learning.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support also thanked the Youth Mayor for her passion and real commitment to her own learning and those of Members of Bridgend Youth Council and also her peers. Learners had demonstrated remarkable resilience and patience over the last year and a fantastic job had been done by them, recognising it had been a very difficult time for them. One thing of pivotal importance throughout was to seek the view of the learner, so learner voice was pivotal to this. He recognised that some of the changes hadn't been communicated effectively to students and he took this on board. The key areas the Youth Mayor had picked up was with regard to inconsistency in adopting a similar style with regard to curriculum and assessments. He noted that all Directors in Wales had attended a meeting with Qualification Wales, prior to the meeting, and there would a publication out shortly indicating how assessments were going to run around substituting grades, and the practice around it, for the summer. He would be more than happy to share this not just with Headteachers, but also learners as well. The other thing that was important was making sure effective practice was shared. One of the key elements from WG funding was around additional money to support teachers to support their learners and hopefully it would be seen over the next couple of months how that had improved things. The



Corporate Director – Education and Family Support acknowledged that there was two actions for him, to make sure that this was communicated more effectively to young people and with regards to the outcomes of today’s meeting with Qualification Wales.

A Member acknowledged the issue of internet connectivity, particular in the ward she represented, which didn’t have fibre optic broadband, and asked if there was any information on how many days or hours pupils had lost due to internet connectivity not being available. She asked in the long term, how would this affect individual and school absence rates if a child was not able to connect online or had a broken laptop, through no fault of their own.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support explained that it had been recognised right at the very beginning that internet connectivity was going to be a key issue especially with a proliferation of online resources and the need to make sure, regardless of geographical or economic background, that all learners had access to reliable broadband. Over 300 portable internet devices (MiFis) had been distributed to learners and if there was a need for this going forward an application would be made corporately for additional funding to support it. This was pivotal and wherever a learner had required it, one had been provided. If additional resources were required, there were additional MiFis and additional laptops available. The issue around the volatility of broadband was a key one and clearly, there was a need to make sure all learners got a consistent approach, although he was not aware of any issues around the Mifi availability. If there were individual connectivity issues in homes within the Members ward, he was happy to connect with economic partners within the Council and wider if need be. Whilst he acknowledged that the Member raised some relevant points in relation to wider connectivity to different communities, that fell outside the Education and Family Support Directorate, although he would be more than happy to look into that.

The Support and Digital Office Manager confirmed that 310 MiFis had been ordered at the start of the year and there were still a couple available if there was still a need with connection charges paid for until the end of July.

A Member asked how the local authority would make sure that children going back to in school learning were not digitally excluded, as they would still have to do homework. How would this be managed on a budget management level because it was important for both the local authority and schools as it would become a pressure in the future with more and more home school learning.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support explained, in relation to the first question, there has been significant investment by WG in all local authorities with regard to the Hwb Infrastructure Grant, funding over several years for a national platform that all schools were using to mitigate the risk of additional costs with regard to software and licensing. Investment had focused on sustainability as kit would become redundant and it was good practice to build on that. Part of all schools budgets included funding to look at the future and make sure that kit was available and that staff were upskilled through regional consortium colleagues, and elsewhere, so they had the skills for the future. The key word was sustainability, both on a funding point of view, from a training point of view and also from a hardware point of view. The next question was a really important one that looked at long-term sustainability. There had been a significant improvement in the way business was conducted online through blended learning formats and this would be developed and enhanced in order to future proof. So, there was the investment in the long-term vision, investment in long term training and adoption by staff and learners and also through various support mechanisms, available through WG, to support investment in hardware and software. This was an important question because again this was costly and there needed to be a plan to back this up so it didn’t fall over in the future.

A Member stated that in the presentation it said WG funding for the Hwb programme was announced in 2019, which was pre Covid-19 so did this mean schools had offered out devices to pupils when they were initially intended for use in school. Was the local authority happy with the supplies in schools, as some would ultimately be written off?

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support explained that in relation to kit, he anticipated that some wouldn't be returned in a fit state for use in schools. There would also be an element of kit obsolete, the longer they were out of the system. In addition, some of them might be damaged and this was readily accepted. Part of the Hwb infrastructure programme, going back to 2019, was the planned refurbishment of school ICT, which featured as part of the grant. The understanding was that this was not just a one-hit capital investment, it would come over a number of years. Obviously, there was a range of terms and conditions needed to be met and the work done to align processes around the investment.

The Headteacher of Litchard Primary School confirmed that kit had been identified for schools through the Hwb project, funded by WG, but lots of schools, including his own, hadn't received their allocations at the start of the pandemic. The team approach was very strong here as schools were giving up the kit that they had and then redistributing it to schools that required that kit. The Hwb kit subsequently arrived, but parents who had received the laptops would be keeping them for sustainability going forward. Also in terms of sustainability, a lot had been done to educate parents about kit they already had including the use of PlayStations and Xboxes to access remote learning, which gave more equity.

The Member stated that CSC had said that most schools had been involved, so asked had there been buy-in by all schools for their support and using their services.

The Principal Improvement Partner, CSC confirmed that all schools had engaged with improvement partners and the full range of other services provided on the council's behalf. Most schools had then taken it forward a little bit further if they felt the need to and some schools have been in a position, through regular check-ins, that they were quite happy with the support they were getting and didn't feel they needed anymore. CSC had been there on demand for schools in every meeting in every possible way and in every forum.

The Headteacher of Brynteg School stated he felt that it was a statement about where schools were. Some schools would access lots of support from CSC, some schools felt that they didn't need to, at a particular point. It went back to his earlier point about trying to support the needs of individual pupils and the same input was not necessarily needed at the same time.

The Member asked, what was being done to look at wellbeing of pupils and to make sure they were being fully supported?

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support explained that in respect of wellbeing, Headteachers and colleagues would be aware that Bridgend had three strategic objectives in Education, wellbeing, literacy and safety, and that safety related to health and safety and safeguarding. Wellbeing had been a key strategic priority since 2017, well before the pandemic, and it had put the Directorate in good stead because this had been a real focus of everything that was done, including around staff and learner wellbeing. He noted that Estyn colleagues were present in the meeting and they certainly recognised in the inspection report, the excellent work the Local Authority with partners in CSC, had done around protecting staff and learning wellbeing.

The Headteacher of Litchard Primary School explained in terms of wellbeing, when children couldn't access work, as January progressed, learners were called in so they could catch-up with their work on school site. Kit that was made available was also distributed them to use. So two things were done, supporting them academically on site if they were not engaging, in addition to home visits as well, as lots of other schools did, and working with other agencies to help and support them with their wellbeing.

The Headteacher of Brynteg School stated in terms of wellbeing the concept of catch up could be quite scary for pupils and it would be difficult for pupils to catch up on all of their work in the next 3 or 4 weeks, and anyone who thought they could, was sadly misguided. It was about wellbeing and ensuring pupils re-learnt how to be part of the school community and enjoy being with each other and having that time with their friends was really important. It was about getting them to the point where they were happy and felt safe and then they would be able to access learning, so wellbeing was very much at the core of thinking at the moment. At school over the last few weeks, it had been recognised that everyone needed a break from computer screens, etc., and therefore wellbeing days had built in every week. These were days when no work was set on screen at all, and pupils were given a menu of activities, which took them away from the screen. It was not only the pupils that had responded well to that, but also parents and carers had said it had taken a lot of pressure off them at home, because they didn't have to worry about checking up on their son or daughter, doing the right thing at the right time. It was equally important about giving teachers and support staff time to think about their own wellbeing, as well and wellbeing would definitely be the key driver for all Headteachers in the next few months.

The Acting Headteacher of Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School explained in respect of wellbeing that pupils enjoyed World Book Day and the Eisteddfod and live assemblies but she was aware that lots of pupils had not been able to access those collective events and have been excluded, for whatever reason. The school had worked with pupils to develop a school ambassador group into online forums to look at what each year group felt would help bring them forward and was most appropriate. The school was fortunate to be part of the PERMA model pilot that worked really well with key stage 3 pupils. In addition key stage 4 and post-16 pupils had asked for wellbeing sessions to happen outside of the school day and were happy to access talks, webinars and question and answer sessions using technology and a blended learning approach. Traditionally extracurricular activities would have been on site at the end of the school day. Moving forward, it was about using the next two weeks to look at how wellbeing activities could be tailored for pupils in the summer term.

A Member asked if the figure was known for the extra funding which had been promised by WG to fill the gap and allow children to catch up. In addition she explained that she had signed-up to CSC's notifications so had been getting the regular WG updates about the changing role of governing bodies. She asked whether there was there a common approach to this and was there set guidance and whether Governing Bodies were getting the support and information they required.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support explained that in respect of the extra funding per local authority or per school, this was not known at present; however, the good news was that the level of funding that had been indicated by WG was significant and was likely to be over £100million across the local authorities in Wales. Obviously the breakdown needed to be seen because it was dependent not just on per capita, but also need e.g. ALN reform funding. As soon as this was known, it would be communicated.

In respect of the question around governors, this was a timely question as it was formerly part of the CSC business plan was to identify 5 key priorities for the local

authority going forward, one of them being clarify around the role of governors, including recruiting, retaining and professional development. More recently, this had come into sharp focus with regard to the role of the governing body and governors, with regard to risk assessments. Operational guidance by WG specified to a degree, that the role needed to be sharpened. One of the things the local authority was doing, as it was duty bound, was to look at Estyn guidance with regard to thematic reviews and also the directives from WG together with advice from CSC to make sure that this is passed on to schools.

The Assistant Director for Partnerships and Improvement, CSC explained that CSC had recruited 13 Regional Leaders for Governance because there was acknowledgement that there was a real development need within the governing bodies across the region. They were a really important tool in the improvement box because it was really key to have the right people to be able to deploy, so following a rigorous assessment process they were recruited and had been part of a training programme. They would sit as part of the School Improvement Team and would be subject to all the quality assurance processes that followed for all school improvement staff. Ultimately, they would be supported in the work they did with governing bodies in schools and the impact of their work would be looked at. In addition it was about enhancing and developing CSC's own support and training for school governors, through the self-evaluation tool for governing bodies. One of the first tools regional leads for governance would be working with schools on, was so governing bodies could effectively self-evaluate their own performance and from that point build a plan to be able to develop and improve their own functioning.

A Member asked if Headteachers felt there were any particular benefits of teaching online they had found, with any examples and thinking about teaching previously done was there anything they would have preferred to do or benefited from doing online.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration suggested that the Member have a look at the written report for the meeting, and in particular, at points 4.6 and 4.7 which listed both the disadvantages and advantages of online and blended learning, which he said was very interesting.

The Headteacher of Brynteg School explained there was lots to learn with good points as well. Teachers in a classroom delivering a difficult concept in a synchronised way would do so with the class around and it would be hoped pupils understood and would take that knowledge away. With recording videos, pupils could play at a time that suited them, they could play it time and time again, if they perhaps didn't understand a concept or stop it at a particular point, and that was a key learning point. In terms of the future, moving forward, it was the link with curriculum for Wales and how blended learning opportunities would allow creation of learning opportunities for pupils so that they could move at a point that suited them, instead of having, for example, to wait until the rest of the class needed to move on. There was some really exciting thinking around blended learning and vertical teaching e.g. bringing different year groups of pupils together to create exciting learning opportunities for them.

The Headteacher of Brackla Primary School explained that one of the benefits of teaching and learning from a blended learning point of view was the confidence of children that may not have had the confidence to be outspoken within the classroom, particularly foundation phase learners. They had a lot more support from adults in the household, so it had been noticed, in terms of benefits to confidence and certain progression in terms of social skills as well. They had also benefited from a Hub provision as well, if they've been in school, in small groups.

The Acting Headteacher of Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School echoed colleagues' comments, it was the confidence. It was really interesting to look at a class of pupils, and pupils that wouldn't normally contribute very actively within the classroom that were quite happy to contribute online, whether that was in the chat or to communicate via their microphones. Similarly, with regards to the vertical idea, it had been really interesting with taster lessons, in terms of options, to give children the opportunity to just sit in on A-level or GCSE lessons, which they wouldn't normally have the opportunity to do so.

The Registered Representative - Church in Wales stated that there had been long discussions, lots of comments, some positive and some negative. He felt it was imperative that a huge vote of thanks to school staff, be placed on record as they had done an incredible amount of work and the overwhelming majority of them had gone way beyond what would be expected. It had been a very difficult time for everyone, for pupils yes, for parents, yes but for school staff as well, so a huge thank you to everyone.

The Chairperson stated that this was a very good way to end the questioning session today and he concurred completely with the registered representatives' comments. Feedback he had received from parents in his ward, was that the transition back into school had been seamless. He thanked all the school staff but also staff from CSC and staff in BCBC, particularly within the Education and Family Support Directorate and asked the Corporate Director – Education and Family Support to pass on the gratitude of the committee for the way in which staff, in various different settings had handled what had been an incredibly challenging period.

The Chairperson thanked all the invitees that had joined the meeting and noted that it had been a really good session with a range of different perspectives and thanked the Youth Mayor, on behalf of the Committee for her insightful comments.

The Invitees left the meeting.

#### Recommendations:

Having considered the report on Blended Learning in Bridgend Schools since March 2020, and Invitees' responses to Members' questions the Committee made the following comments and recommendations:

The Committee wanted to formally thank all school and teaching staff for their hard work throughout this difficult time.

The Committee requested that:

- Central South Consortium share data from the WG commissioned research upon Blended Learning when made available.
- Figures regarding the wide range of engagement be provided by Central South Consortium.
- The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support ensures that HR continues to provide up to date advice to school and teaching staff on wellbeing.
- The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support provide Members with more information regarding his mention of a strategy needed to deal with

Digital Exclusion and also how it is funded moving forwards as an important priority for the Authority.

- The Authority engage with Welsh Government to lobby for improved internet connectivity (e.g. fibre optic broadband) and coverage across the County with a focus on rural and valley communities as this will be a key asset to the positive continuation of blended learning.
- The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support provides clarification that schools will have enough computer equipment, as they had pooled their equipment based on the 2019 WG announcement that ICT was being upgraded for schools.
- Consideration be given to amending absence recording to make allowances for those pupils who may not be able to take part in an online based school day due to internet connectivity or device issues.
- Arising from the Youth Mayor's comments:
  - That inequalities and differences between same school and year groups in terms of advancement or difference in work completion are assessed and lessons learnt approach adopted.
  - That information surrounding how learning will change, the new procedures and forthcoming changes to education are properly shared with pupils as well as staff and other bodies.

22. URGENT ITEMS

None

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

12 JULY 2021

#### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

#### ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATIONAL TRIBUNAL (ALNET) ACT 2018

#### 1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of:

- the developments of the ALNET Act (2018) in Wales; and
- the work undertaken across the region to prepare for the implementation of the Act and how as a local authority we are preparing for it.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

3.1 The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 was implemented on 24 January 2018. In addition there are two sets of regulations namely the Additional Learning Needs(Wales) Regulations 2021 and the Education Tribunal (Wales) Regulations 2021. There is also the Additional Learning Needs Code. The Act makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN) from the age of 0-

25. This is to replace existing legislation surrounding special educational needs (SEN) and the assessment of children and young people with learning and/or disabilities in post-16 education and training. The Act is not yet in force for children over compulsory school age. The Special Education Needs Tribunal (SENTW) which provides for parents/carers to appeal decisions made by the Council about their child's learning needs has been renamed the Education Tribunal for Wales.

- 3.2 The ALN Code and regulations were approved by the Senedd on 23 March 2021. Along with the ALN Act 2018, the Code and regulations will create the statutory ALN system in Wales. The ALN Code provides statutory guidance on the exercise of functions under Part 2 of the 2018 Act and on other matters connected with identifying and meeting ALN.
- 3.3 The ALN system aims to transform the expectations, experiences and outcomes for children and young people with ALN. It places the learners' views, wishes and feelings at the heart of the process of planning the support required to enable them to learn effectively and achieve their full potential.
- 3.4 From September 2021, the ALN system will come into force over a three-year phased implementation period.
- 3.5 Three new statutory ALN co-ordinating roles came into force on 4 January 2021 ahead of the planned introduction of the ALN system in September 2021. The three co-ordinating roles are as follows:
- Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCO). Each school has a named ALNCo. will have responsibility for co-ordinating additional learning provision
  - Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO); will have responsibility for co-ordinating the Health Board's functions, who is essentially the Health Board's appointed ALN officer and the
  - Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (Early Years ALNLO) who will have responsibility for co-ordinating the authority's functions for children who are under compulsory school age who are not attending maintained schools"
- 3.6 Since 4 September 2018, there has been an Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales Act Central South Regional Transformation Plan written and submitted to Welsh Government on an annual basis. The Regional Implementation Plan aligns support to the objectives of the ALNET Act so that local authorities, CSC, schools, Further Education (FE) colleges and local health boards collaborate to transform the expectations, experiences and outcomes for children and young people with ALN.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**



4.1 The following four high-level regional priorities were detailed in the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales Act Central South Regional ALN Transformation Plan 2020-2021 (Appendix A).

- Ensure that all local authorities develop consistent practices and collaborate effectively with key partners to prepare for the new ways of working.
- Ensure that local authority maintained schools develop consistent approaches to improving practice for learners with ALN that meet the expectations of the Act and are complementary to the wider national education reforms.
- Develop support and provision for post compulsory-aged learners through identifying local and potential regional offers.
- Develop health board preparedness for implementation of the Act

4.2 Bridgend County Borough Council Regional Transformation Plan 2020-2021 (Appendix B) outlines the work undertaken by the local authority in preparation for the implementation of the Act.

- Piloting the roll out of individual development plans (IDPs) on a pre-determined cohort through 0 to 25 including early years, further education and health.
- Development of information technology (IT) infrastructure to support the planned transfer from the old to the new system.
- Embedding and refining the early year's training programme. The Early Years ALNLO was appointed to meet the statutory timeframe of the 4 January 2021.
- Creating guidance on what provision should ordinarily be made available by schools. This is a regional document that is at the final stage of consultation and will be in place for schools for September 2021.
- Provision of advice and guidance for parents/carers on the local authority website about the new way of working and what support they can expect from schools. The local authority web page will be launched towards the beginning of July 2021, which is in conjunction with a regional launch.
- Involving independent parent support services in updating guidance materials. This has been actioned regionally.
- Continuation of professional learning opportunities for ALNCoS that focus on developing skills and expertise to carry out the new statutory duties. There has been a rolling programme of ALN cluster leads' meetings and ALNCo forums.

- Continue to develop strategic links with further education colleges to develop an agreed vision for inclusion and supporting the needs of learners with additional learning needs. Transition guidance has been developed.
- Develop a shared understanding between the health board and Local authorities for supporting identifying and supporting the needs of learners with ALN (0-25). The DECLO was appointed to meet the statutory timeframe of 4 January 2021.
- Local authority legal departments to increase knowledge of the ALNET Act and its implications. This has been done regionally with a training event held in June 2021.
- Develop a regional approach to increase the ALN provision available to Welsh-medium schools. Bridgend County Borough Council is represented in this regional training programme with a member of staff from the Learner Support Service.

4.3 The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales Act Central South Regional Transformation Plan 2021-2022 is awaiting final approval from Welsh Government. The priorities identified in the plan are:

- Through partnership working, develop understanding across agencies of person-centred practice to facilitate collaborative discussion about needs, outcomes and provision with all concerned.
- Develop consistency of practice in the production of high-quality individual development plans (IDPs) and the corresponding arrangements necessary for monitoring and reviewing their impact on learner progress.
- Explore arrangements between the local authority and its delivery partners for keeping under review the quality and sufficiency of additional learning provision to meet the current and future needs of its population of learners with ALN.
- Establish a set of principles that articulate when it would be reasonable for the local authority to secure additional learning provision (ALP).
- Provide consistent and transparent information and advice about the new ALN system and develop an integrated approach to address disputes and disagreements so that they can be avoided or resolved at an early stage.
- Develop processes to support the new way of working and improve management information systems, including IT infrastructure to ensure that both the new ALN arrangements and the old SEN arrangements can co-exist over the implementation period.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

- 6.1 As this is an information report, an equalities impact assessment is not required at this stage. The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.
- 6.2 The ALNET Act and Code of Practice clearly articulate the Equalities Act (2010) statutory requirements.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

- 7.1 The well-being goals and principles prescribed for within the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 connect directly to the objectives of the ALNET Act. The ALNET Act is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle and more specifically as follows:

Long-term	The ALNET Act focuses on meeting the needs of children and young people from the age of 0-25.
Prevention	The focus of the ALNET Act is upon early identification of need and ensuring that there is appropriate learning provision in place to meet individual needs.
Integration	The ALNET Act addresses the need for a coherent delivery of economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes.
Collaboration	A fundamental principal of the ALNET Act focuses on improving collaboration and creating a unified system.
Involvement	Ensuring that children and young people, parents and carers are at the heart of the system and that needs are discussed in a person centered way.

## **8. Financial implications**

- 8.1 In order to support the implementation of this new system, Welsh Government is providing financial assistance through the ALN Transformation Grant. This is the fifth year of the five financial years that the grant will be available. The finance is delegated via a host local authority acting on behalf of the local authorities in the region, using the same footprint as the four regional education consortia. The grant must be used on a regional strategic basis and consideration should be given to regional sustainability beyond the life time of the grant.

- 8.2 Previously, Welsh Government has provided funding for local authorities to develop the person-centered planning (PCP) approach. As part of CSC, Bridgend County Borough Council received £26k over a two-year period to develop this approach with staff within Bridgend County. This continues to be embedded as key staff have been trained to cascade the approach in order to provide sustainability.
- 8.3 The full cost of implementing the Act and phasing it in over three years from September 2021 will be monitored and reviewed. The following financial implications have been identified. Two additional IDP Co-ordinators to support the increase of age range of 0-25, at a cost of £76,590 with oncosts. An ALP Co-ordinator to support the duty upon local authorities of keeping under review the quality and sufficiency of additional learning provision, at a cost of £68,720 with oncosts. A higher-level teaching assistant (HLTA) to support the work of early years at a cost of £24,850 including oncosts. A budget pressures bid will be submitted as part of the MTFs 2022-26 process. If the bid is unsuccessful then any additional costs will have to be met from within the directorate budget or other external funding sources.

## **9. Recommendation(s)**

9.1 The Committee is requested to:

- note the content of this report in relation to the ALNET Act;
- consider and agree any recommendations the committee may wish to make consistent with its challenge and support role in light of this report; and
- consider the progress to date and to be aware of the continued expectations on local authorities and other strategic partners to deliver against the wide-ranging transformation programme.

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**Background documents:**

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<https://gov.wales/additional-learning-needs>



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## Introduction

The purpose of this project is to ensure that the Central South Region is able to meet the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act in transforming expectations and outcomes for children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). The Act aims to create:

- a unified legislative framework to support all children of compulsory school age or below with additional learning needs (ALN) and to support young people with ALN who are in school or further education (FE);
- an integrated, collaborative process of assessment, planning and monitoring which facilitates early, timely and effective interventions; and
- a fair and transparent system for providing information and advice, and for resolving concerns and appeals.

The Act is supported by a statutory ALN Code (currently in draft) which details the following five principles that will underpin the ALN system:

- a) A rights-based approach where the views, wishes and feelings of the child, child's parents/carers or young person are central to planning and provision of support.
- b) Early identification, intervention and effective transition planning
- c) Collaboration where all involved work together in the best interests of the child or young person
- d) Inclusive education supporting participation fully in mainstream education, wherever, feasible and a whole setting approach to meeting the needs of learners with ALN.
- e) A bilingual system where all reasonable steps are taken to deliver additional learning provision (ALP) in Welsh for children and young people who require support through the medium of Welsh.

The Act and Code coupled with the wider elements of the ALN Transformation Programme of workforce development, transition support and supplementary supporting policy will transform ways of working so that the new ALN system will:

- ensure that all learners with ALN are supported to overcome barriers to learning and achieve their full potential;
- improve the planning and delivery of support for learners from 0 to 25 with ALN, placing learners' needs, views, wishes and feelings at the heart of the process; and
- focus on the importance of identifying needs early and putting in place timely and effective interventions which are monitored and adapted to ensure they deliver the desired outcomes.

Implementation of the new system will begin in September 2021 and be completed by the end of 2024 with the additional expectation that new the statutory roles introduced through the Act, namely the Local Authority Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (LA ALN LO), the school Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) and the Health Board Designated Educational Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO) are in post by January 2021.





## Regional Context

The following four high-level regional priorities details how the Central South region will prepare for the implementation of the act during 2020-21:

1. Ensure that all local authorities develop consistent practices and collaborate effectively with key partners to prepare for the new ways of working.
2. Ensure that local authority maintained schools develop consistent approaches to improving practice for learners with ALN that meet the expectations of the Act and are complementary to the wider national education reforms.
3. Develop support and provision for post compulsory-aged learners through identifying local and potential regional offers.
4. Develop Health Board preparedness for implementation of the Act

In order to be able to deliver on all aspects of the regional plan collaboration is required at all levels of the system within and between local authorities, school improvement services, FE colleges and the Health Boards. A central theme that runs throughout the regional plan is developing a shared and joint understanding of high quality and effective support and provision for children and young people with ALN and the co-dependency on partnership working to deliver this vision.

This project plan is funded by the Transformation Grant and allocated on a formula funding basis (70% pupil numbers and 30% school numbers). The Central South region has £809,562 this financial year to support the above priorities. The Transformation Grant is administered and monitored by the host authority, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The method of payment to partners will be done through a combination of journal transfers, direct invoicing or service level agreements depending on the activity.

### Allocation of grant spend 2020-21

Local Authorities	Schools	FE	Health	Centrally retained	Total
£248,487	£388,575	£80,000	£60,000	£32,500	£809,562

This project plan is supported by service level agreements with the local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan, the health boards of Cwm Taf Morgannwg and Cardiff and the Vale, and the further education institutes of Bridgend College, Cardiff and the Vale College, Coleg y Cymoedd and Merthyr College.



Each high level action is underpinned by detailed plans within local authorities, further education colleges, UHBs that identify timescales, outputs, products and outcomes which are subjected to termly monitoring arrangements. Progress against the plan is monitored by the Regional ALN Transformation Project Board.

This Central South Region ALN Transformation Plan has been created during a time of considerable turmoil and uncertainty following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The ability to deliver on the plan in its entirety is dependent on services and settings being able to commit suitable time and effort to the ALN Transformation Programme. All partners have expressed an intention to make best endeavours to achieve the identified objectives, but because of the continuing disruptions caused by the pandemic these may need to be amended as implications become manifest, in response to the recovery plans in place across all settings, health boards and local authorities



**PRIORITY 1: Ensure that all local authorities develop consistent practices and collaborate effectively with key partners to prepare for the new ways of working**

Objectives:	
1.1	<p>Develop consistency of practice across the region in relation to Individual Development Plans through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piloting the roll out of Individual Development Plans on a pre-determined cohort within each LA</li> <li>• Improving inclusion officer knowledge of IDPs, their role in contributing to the process and how to collaborate in writing effective and appropriate recommendations that address identified specific barriers to learning</li> <li>• Ensuring that quality assurance processes are in place so that recommendations by inclusion officers concerning ALP are research-informed and evidence-based</li> <li>• Collaboration with Early Years settings, mainstream and special schools and FEIs on pilot IDPs within each LA</li> <li>• Involving health and social care on appropriate cases within each LA</li> <li>• All LAs sharing the feedback from each IDP pilot to inform regional best practice</li> <li>• Exploring the changes needed in internal LA processes for identifying, maintaining an IDP and securing ALP</li> <li>• Disseminating the learning from the IDP pilot with teaching practitioners and providing exemplar guidance on effective IDP processes</li> <li>• Improving practitioners' skills in writing effective IDPs that inform teaching and learning and address specific barriers to learning</li> </ul>
1.2	<p>Develop management information systems, including IT infrastructure to support improvement of provision for learners through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each LA refining current arrangements or if necessary exploring new electronic systems for collecting and managing information in readiness for the new way of working.</li> <li>• The use of the electronic platform is consistent across all inclusion teams/officers</li> <li>• Exploring the developments needed to allow other stakeholders to access and contribute using the electronic platform</li> <li>• Refining LA based monitoring processes to gather information about the progress of learners with LA maintained IDPs/statements</li> <li>• Consideration of staffing needs to enable timely transfer of information from the old system to the new system, as well as continuing to manage the old system until the end of the mandatory roll out in 2024</li> <li>• Identification of a lead in each LA as the main point of contact to receive and transfer information with the health and FEIs</li> <li>• Use of process maps to ensure compliance with the prescribed timescales for identifying ALN and creating and reviewing IDPs.</li> </ul>



1.3	<p>Develop consistency of practice across the region for Early Years through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that LA ALN Lead Officers are in place by January 2021 and that the duties and responsibilities reflect the regional job description</li> <li>• The delivery of the regional training modules to early years practitioners/settings</li> <li>• Continued involvement of a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency approach in evaluating and refining the EY training modules</li> <li>• Integration of the Early Years training offer into the LAs continuing professional development training plan as a rolling programme</li> <li>• Improving LA monitoring systems and process to ensure consistency of practice across EY settings</li> <li>• Updating/creating Early Years toolkit that reflects both regional expectations and provision at a local level</li> <li>• Ensure engagement of social care and health in developing the EY toolkit with consideration given to working at an inter-regional level, for example on a health board footprint</li> </ul>
1.4	<p>Developing a joint and agreed approach on what provision schools should ordinarily be expected to make available for learners with ALN through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration between LAs and the Central South Consortium in developing an understanding of their reciprocal and co-dependent roles in promoting consistent practice across all schools</li> <li>• Exploring operational arrangements between the LA and the CSC to ensure that the LA will be able to undertake its statutory duty to review ALP and have a view on the extent to which schools provide: high quality, differentiated teaching for learners with ALN; targeted intervention and support for learners with ALN; effective systems for monitoring the progress and achievement of learners with ALN and their inclusion in the everyday life of the school; processes for reviewing the effectiveness of interventions used to support learners with ALN and the skills and expertise of staff; and methods for involving learners and parents at every stage</li> <li>• Designing joint arrangements between LAs and the CSC so that schools are effectively and consistently held to account for the progress of learners with ALN and the quality of provision and leadership for ALN</li> <li>• Joint working between the LA and the CSC in promoting a school-to-school approach to building capacity and improvement planning for ALN based on a wide range of quality assured information</li> <li>• Training opportunities to support school governors in providing strategic direction for schools in line with the legally enforceable parameters of the Act.</li> <li>• Co-construction of regional guidance for schools between LAs, CSC and practitioners on universal teaching and learning and additional learning provision.</li> <li>• Continued joint working between LAs in creating a regional definition of ALN and criteria for IDPs</li> <li>• Updating the graduated response of each LA so that it reflects local ALP and corresponding service pathways</li> <li>• Each LA to revisit criteria for school/LA maintained IDPs and if appropriate refine in the light of the regional definition</li> </ul>



1.5	<p>Continuation of professional learning opportunities for ALNCoS that focus on developing skills and expertise to carry out the new statutory duties through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordination of approach between LAs and the CSC in providing a coherent and comprehensive professional learning programme to support ALN Act school readiness for leaders and practitioners</li> <li>• Analysis of a wide range of sources including reviews/ audits/surveys to inform collaborative LA and CSC improvement planning for ALN at school, cluster, LA and regional level</li> <li>• LA-led training for schools on their statutory duties and the legally enforceable parameters of the Act</li> <li>• LA-led training for schools on the statutory duties on LAs and the local arrangements in place to comply with all requirements</li> <li>• Developing quality assured processes between LAs and the CSC that identify excellence to support capacity building through a school-led, school to school approach</li> </ul>
1.6	<p>Develop a shared understanding between Health Board and LAs for supporting identifying and supporting the needs of learners with ALN (0-25).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with health in LA-led working party to consider and refine the graduated response from occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and CAHMS and ensure that proposals are fit for purpose and deliverable in all educational settings.</li> <li>• LAs and health professionals to co-create a regional document detailing expectations on provision in mainstream and specialist settings and how the respective support is provided to develop the graduated response as identified.</li> <li>• LAs to contribute to Health Board training plan to increase capacity about universal, inclusive provision and joint approaches to early intervention for children and young people with ALN</li> </ul>
1.7	<p>Continue to develop strategic links with post 16/19 providers and settings to develop an agreed vision for inclusion and supporting the needs of learners with additional learning needs through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with colleges on LA-led working party to complete a joint graduated response for FE and LA maintained IDPs</li> <li>• LAs to scope and cost proposals, including commissioning arrangements for supporting ALN practice in FE</li> <li>• Agreeing and implementing the LA multi-agency Transition Protocol/Guidance</li> <li>• LAs to identify future local needs and secure early engagement with FEIs on potential action planning</li> <li>• Regional collaboration on the development of guidance/protocol into employment and work-based learning other than FE</li> <li>• LAs to work together to identify any collective gaps in specialist provision and work with the FE Transformation Lead to explore regional solutions.</li> </ul>
1.8	<p>Provision of advice and guidance for parents/carers through:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of accessible information about the new way of working to include the statutory duties on LAs and the corresponding local operational arrangements</li> <li>• Use of regionally agreed easy read resources to promote the same message across the region</li> <li>• Consideration given to the identification and resource implications of a named contact point so that parents/carers have access to objective advice and guidance promote avoiding dispute and early resolution</li> <li>• Continued use of parent/carer focus groups to inform the development of LA information, guidance and advice so that is shaped by service users</li> </ul>
1.9	<p>Improving independent parent/carer/young person support services through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership with the independent parent/carer service to review and amend the current regional guidance</li> <li>• Each LA to review current parent partnership and advocacy services in line with the ALN Code</li> <li>• Extending the provision to include the service for young people up to the age of 25</li> </ul>
1.10	<p>Continue to develop a regional approach to support Welsh medium provision and increase consistency and sharing of best practice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining a regional training that is accessible to all Welsh medium schools</li> <li>• Delivery of the regional training plan</li> <li>• Development of Welsh medium resources</li> <li>• Evaluating the success of the training plan and planning to meet future needs.</li> <li>• Collaboration between Cardiff University, CSC, LAs and schools to pilot the roll-out of the regional commissioned standardised Welsh medium reading test</li> </ul>
1.11	<p>Improving knowledge on the legal implications of the new ALN system through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional training for legal services on the statutory duties</li> <li>• Consultation between legal departments and other directorates and services within LAs on the implications of the Act and Code</li> <li>• Review and update council policies to reflect the new ALN system</li> <li>• Raise awareness of implications of the new duties to all stakeholders</li> </ul>
1.12	<p>Improving the capacity of the sensory specialist work force by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of training programme to meet demand as identified in each LA</li> </ul>



**PRIORITY 2: Ensure that local authority maintained schools develop consistent approaches to improving practice for learners with ALN that meet the expectations of the Act and are complementary to the wider national education reforms.**

Objectives:	
2.1	<p>ALNCoS will need to be in post in all schools by January 2021. School leaders will need to ensure that the ALNCo has the necessary skills to enable the school to deliver the functions prescribed in law. Professional learning activities will focus on the development of the strategic role of the ALNCo in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping schools plan, manage and deliver their duties and responsibilities in identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with ALN.</li> <li>• Guiding the senior leadership team in advising, supporting and challenging the systems and process to identify and meet the needs of pupils with ALN.</li> <li>• Involvement in the strategic co-ordination of ALN resources and decisions about budgets and resources and to have a view on value for money.</li> <li>• Ensuring that they are not directly involved in day to day process for supporting pupils ALN and that all teachers are held to account for the progress of learners with ALN in all lessons.</li> <li>• Providing professional guidance to class teachers on effective pedagogical practice that accelerates learning for pupils with ALN.</li> <li>• Reporting to governors on the quality of progress, provision and leadership for ALN.</li> </ul>
2.2	<p>Develop consistency across the region in relation to school practice for meeting the needs of learners with ALN through joint collaboration between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools and LAs on pilot IDPs.</li> <li>• Schools, LAs and the CSC on good quality universal teaching and learning and evidence-based additional learning provision.</li> <li>• Schools, LAs and CSC on improving quality assurance systems for evaluating learner progress, provision and leadership.</li> <li>• Schools, LAs and CSC in promoting the regional ALN Transformation resources and guidance.</li> </ul>
2.3	<p>Guidance for governors on providing strategic direction for schools in line with the legally enforceable parameters of the Act. This will focus on the duties of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying ALN</li> <li>• Preparing, creating and maintaining Individual Development Plans</li> <li>• Ceasing IDPs</li> <li>• Holding schools to account for the educational provision and leadership for ALN as well as the progress of learners with ALN.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing accessible information to parents/carers, children and young people</li> <li>• Ensuring that children, young people and their parents/carers are fully involved in decisions that affect them</li> <li>• Inclusive whole-school practices that ensure the full involvement of learners with ALN in all aspects of school life</li> </ul>
2.4	<p>Schools to support parents/carers and children and young people in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the new ways of working</li> <li>• Providing information about processes at school for identifying ALN and providing ALP.</li> <li>• Promoting regionally created easy read and accessible resources.</li> <li>• Signposting to the LA for further information, advice and support</li> <li>• Avoiding disputes and early dispute resolution</li> <li>• Promoting the rights of appeal</li> <li>• Signposting to independent parent/carer services</li> </ul>





**PRIORITY 3: Develop support and provision for post compulsory-aged learners through identifying local and potential regional offers.**

Objectives:	
3.1	<p>Develop consistency of practice across the college in relation to Individual Development Plans through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborating with LAs on pilot IDPs</li> <li>• Disseminating learning from previous college-based IDP pilot in terms of effectiveness of impact on outcomes and progress of learners</li> <li>• Improving lecturers' knowledge of IDPs, and how they inform teaching and learning</li> <li>• Developing processes that allow lecturers to contribute to the IDP process</li> <li>• Ensuring that quality assurance processes are in place so that the ALP provided is research-informed and evidence-based</li> </ul>
3.2	<p>Develop management information systems, including IT infrastructure to support improvement of provision for learners so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each department/subject area contributes to the information gathering on learners and that arrangements are in place to let staff know about the needs of learners and how to meet those needs</li> <li>• Quality assurance processes are refined and that college-based monitoring of teaching and learning demonstrates that all lecturers address the barriers to learning in their subject area</li> <li>• Monitoring and tracking the effectiveness of the ALP ensures accelerated learning</li> <li>• A college lead is identified as the main point of contact to receive and transfer information with the LA</li> <li>• The prescribed timescales for identifying ALN and creating and reviewing IDPs are met.</li> </ul>
3.3	<p>Provide advice and guidance for young people about the new ALN system and what support they can expect from the college and its partners through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of the national Pathfinder website</li> <li>• Ensuring that college websites display what is available to learners with ALN</li> <li>• Providing accessible information about the new way of working and processes at the college for identifying ALN and appropriate ALP</li> <li>• Putting in place arrangements for avoiding disputes and early dispute resolution</li> <li>• Signposting to the LA for further information, advice and support</li> <li>• Promoting the rights of appeal</li> <li>• Engaging with the LA to secure access to independent advocacy services</li> </ul>



3.4	<p>Continuation of professional development for staff that focuses on developing skills and expertise to support young people with ALN through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating and delivering a training plan for staff that emphasises inclusive practices and focuses on pedagogical approaches to mitigate barriers to learning</li> <li>• Ensuring that all staff have access to a central bank of quality-assured, resources/information to support professional development</li> <li>• Evaluating the effectiveness of the training plan on improving outcomes for learners</li> </ul>
3.5	<p>Continue to develop strategic links with LAs and UHBs to establish an agreed vision for inclusion and supporting the needs of young people with additional learning needs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging in LA-led working party to refine FE Universal and ALP and collaborate on a joint graduated response</li> <li>• Inclusion officers and college staff co-creating a local document detailing expectations for provision and how the respective support is provided to develop the graduated response as identified.</li> <li>• Collaborating with the LA on the Transition Protocol</li> <li>• Continuing to host events that promote the college offer with schools and wider partners</li> <li>• Strengthening links between colleges and adult health services through the identification of key leads</li> <li>• Working with other colleges to compare and contrast ALP and where appropriate share good practice to develop capacity</li> </ul>



#### PRIORITY 4: Develop Health Board preparedness for implementation of the Act

Objectives:	
4.1	<p>Ensure that a Designated Educational Clinical Lead is in post by January 2021 through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration between Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB and Cardiff and the Vale UHB to secure a DECLO to cover both areas</li> </ul>
4.2	<p>Develop consistency of practice across the Health Board in relation to Individual Development Plans through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with LAs and schools on pilot IDPs</li> <li>• Identification of capacity within services to support engagement in the LA IDP pilot</li> <li>• Improving professionals' knowledge of IDPs, their role in contributing to the process and how to write effective and appropriate health specific recommendations for ALP</li> <li>• Ensuring that quality assurance process are in place so that all recommendations for ALP are research-informed and evidence-based</li> <li>• Improving collaboration between children and adult departments to create a seamless approach for children and young people with ALN within the 0-25 age range</li> </ul>
4.3	<p>Develop management information systems, including IT infrastructure to support the planned new way of working to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope and develop IT infrastructure requirements</li> <li>• Explore possibility of single point of entry and exit in terms of communicating with LA</li> <li>• Increase consistency of operating processes across and between different therapies and disciplines of managing referrals within prescribed timescales.</li> <li>• Create reporting mechanisms that analyse performance of effectiveness of managing referrals, providing advice where appropriate and providing ALP when necessary.</li> </ul>
4.4	<p>Continue to provide a professional development programme for staff to support the new way of working by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a training plan, based on internal audit, for key staff that is linked to performance management</li> <li>• Ensuring that all relevant staff have access to and engage with the Eliesha e-training modules in line with their development need</li> </ul>
4.5	<p>Collaborate with LAs and FEIs to develop a shared and joint understanding of meeting the needs of children and young people with ALN between the ages of 0-25 by:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging in LA-led working party to refine and improve the graduated response from occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and CAHMS</li> <li>Inclusion officers and health specialists co-creating a regional document detailing expectations on provision in mainstream and specialist settings and how the respective support is provided to develop the graduated response as identified.</li> <li>Strengthening links between adult health services and local colleges through the identification of relevant personnel in the adult teams</li> <li>Working with FE to increase understanding of how best to support the health needs of young people</li> </ul>
4.6	<p>Embed the regional multi-agency, multi-disciplinary Early Years training programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key health professional to deliver the training modules in-house</li> <li>Identify and release key health professionals to continue working with LA officers to refine the training programme</li> </ul>
4.7	<p>Increase knowledge of the Act and its implications for those with Putting it Right responsibilities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing training for key professionals on the Act</li> <li>Identify potential resource implications and risks for the Health Board</li> </ul>
4.8	<p>Improve effectiveness and efficiency of internal health arrangements for early identification of ALN to provide timely information for LAs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refining health multiservice identification processes</li> <li>Collaboration with LAs on discreet pilots, for example special school triage/ Early Years</li> </ul>



# **Bridgend County Borough Council**

## **ALN Regional Transformation Plan**

**2020/2021**

Key priorities have been identified as follows:

1. Ensure that all local authorities develop consistent practices and collaborate effectively with key partners to prepare for the new ways of working.
2. Ensure that local authority maintained schools develop consistent approaches to improving practice for learners with ALN that meet the expectations of the Act and are complementary to the wider national education reforms.
3. Develop support and provision for post compulsory-aged learners through identifying local and potential regional offers.
4. Develop Health Board preparedness for implementation of the Act

Actions	Costings	Milestones/Sub Actions that will help to achieve the Action	Start Date	Delivery Date	Accountable Officer	Impact Measures	Evaluation RAYG
Piloting the roll out of Individual Development Plans on a pre-determined cohort	Officer time  School staff time	Work with special schools and a cohort of mainstream settings to pilot IDPs for transition pupils	September 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead  Principal Educational Psychologist  Link Educational Psychologists  Specialist Teacher Cognition and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IDPs to replace statements</li> <li>• List of statements that have been transferred to IDPs</li> <li>• Guidance process document</li> </ul>	
	Officer time	Pilot IDPs for cohort of pupils who will access a	January 2021	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IDPs to replace statements</li> </ul>	

## Appendix B

	School staff time	new special school placement and transition to FEI			Principal Educational Psychologist  Link Educational Psychologists  Specialist Teacher Cognition and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List of statements that have been transferred to IDPs</li> <li>Guidance process document</li> </ul>	
Development of IT infrastructure to support the planned transfer from the old to the new system.	Officer Time	Develop use of special educational needs portal (SEN) within each local authority.	October 2021	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead  Group Manager Business Support  Principal Educational Psychologist  Local authority officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at the IDP Expert Group</li> <li>Develop an electronic platform.</li> <li>Trial the electronic platform</li> <li>Use of the electronic platform by all stakeholders.</li> </ul>	
Embedding and refining the EYs	Officer Time	EYs sub-regional group to develop EYs toolkit & ensure that it aligns with	November 2020	March 2021	Early years' regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Years Toolkit</li> <li>Training offer</li> </ul>	

## Appendix B

training programme <b>Merthyr Local Authority to lead</b>		Bridgend working practices			working group  Early Years EPS Early Years and Childcare Manager		
<b>Joint Project Board with Merthyr and RCT</b>	Officer Time  School staff time	Roll-out of training to all early years settings and schools	November 2020	March 2021	Early years' regional working group  Early Years EPS Early Years and Childcare Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training offer</li> <li>• 75% of registered setting trained</li> <li>• 100% of schools trained</li> </ul>	
	Officer Time	Include EYs training in the Inclusion Service training offer	Sept 2020	November 2020	Early years' regional working group  Early Years EPS Early Years and Childcare Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training offer</li> </ul>	



## Appendix B

		EYs ALN LO to establish an agreed provision map and pathway for early years settings and transition into school	January 2021	March 2021	Early years' regional working group  Early Years EPS Early Years and Childcare Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years Toolkit</li> <li>• Training offer</li> <li>• Provision map and pathway</li> </ul>	
Creating guidance on what provision should ordinarily be made available by schools	Officer Time	Ensure a shared understanding between Central South Consortium (CSC) and Inclusion teams in each local authority to provide effective collaborative support and challenge to schools regarding universal provision / good quality teaching and learning.	September 2020	November 2020	Transformation Lead / Principal Engagement Officer  LA Inclusion Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed joint protocol for support and challenge to schools</li> </ul>	
		Produce a regional document on effective universal provision.	Sept 2020	November 2020	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional document on effective universal provision</li> </ul>	
		Agree on a regional definition of ALN and criteria for school and local authority based IDPs	Sept 2020	Nov 2020	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed regional definition of ALN</li> </ul>	

## Appendix B

	Officer Time	LA graduated response for universal provision and ALP (school & LA based IDPs)	December 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads Principal Educational Psychologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate and develop a graduated response for Bridgend</li> </ul>	
	Officer Time	Revised LA criteria for school and LA based IDPs and service pathways	December 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads Principal Educational Psychologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise ALN criteria documentation for Bridgend</li> </ul>	
Provision of advice and guidance for parents/carers on LA website about the new way of working and what support they can expect from schools	Officer Time	Publish advice and guidance to parents on the statutory duties upon local authorities under the Act and ALN Code	December 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent friendly advice and guidance</li> <li>Bridgend Communication Strategy</li> </ul>	
	Officer Time	Publish advice and guidance regarding local operational arrangements for ALN	December 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent friendly advice and guidance</li> <li>Bridgend Communication Strategy</li> </ul>	

## Appendix B

the LA and its partners	Officer Time	Launch Bridgend Communication Strategy following publication of the final Code	December 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent friendly advice and guidance</li> <li>• Bridgend Communication Strategy</li> </ul>	
Involving independent parent support services in updating guidance materials		Review current SNAP guidance materials and identify any areas for modifying to reflect local / regional context	September 2020	December 2020	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local guidance materials</li> <li>• Arrangements in place for advocacy and revised arrangements for PPS</li> </ul>	
	Officer Time	Review parent partnership & advocacy arrangements in line with the requirements of the ALN Code	December 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local guidance materials</li> <li>• Arrangements in place for advocacy and revised arrangements for PPS</li> </ul>	
Continuation of professional learning opportunities for ALNCoS that focus on developing skills and expertise to	Officer Time	Align the work of CSC engagement partners and local authority officers to ensure an agreed understanding and common approach to ALN readiness of schools	November 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead / Principal Engagement Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed role and responsibilities reflected in business plans</li> </ul>	
		Devise ALN readiness audits tailored to different	September 2020	December 2020	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group specific audit tools</li> </ul>	

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carry out the new statutory duties		key professionals (e.g. ALNCo, head teachers, governing bodies, elected members) to inform actions / intervention at school, local authority and regional level					
	School Staff Time	Develop the role of ALN Cluster Leads as Pathfinders.	September 2020	March 2021	Transformation Lead LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads Principal Educational Psychologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ALN Cluster Leads meetings</li> <li>ALNCo Forums</li> </ul>	
		Training programme devised for ALNcos, head teachers and governing bodies on statutory requirements of ALN Code	December 2020	January 2021	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of audits</li> <li>Training programme</li> </ul>	
	School staff time	Training programme delivered for all ALNcos and other relevant professionals on compliance with statutory	January 2021	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead ALN Inclusion Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of training</li> </ul>	

## Appendix B

		duties in the Code within Bridgend context.			Principal Educational Psychologist		
<p>Continue to develop strategic links with further education colleges to develop an agreed vision for inclusion and supporting the needs of learners with additional learning needs.</p> <p><b>Joint Project Board with Merthyr and RCT</b></p>		Agreed multi-agency post 16-19 transition guidance	September 2020	November 2020	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final post 16-19 transition guidance</li> <li>• Agreed graduated response documentation for FE</li> <li>• Agreed local offer</li> <li>• Costed proposals for LA support to local FEIs</li> <li>• Analysis of regional demand, map &amp; gap analysis of current provision and costed proposals</li> </ul>	
	Officer Time	Pilot transition guidance	December 2020	March 2021	Bridgend College Lead  LA Inclusion Lead  Bridgend working party		
		Agreed graduated response for FEI & LA maintained IDPs	December 2020	January 2021	Transformation Lead		
		<i>From 2019/2020 action plan (carried over):</i>  Work with FEI to agree on current local offer, identify potential future needs and create action plan	September 2020	December 2020	Transformation Lead		
		<i>From 2019/2020 action plan (carried over):</i>  Scope and cost proposals for supporting ALN practice in FE,	January 2021	March 2021	Transformation Lead		

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		including commissioning arrangements					
Develop a shared understanding between the Health Board and LAs for supporting identifying and supporting the needs of learners with ALN (0-25).  <b>CTM Joint Project Board</b>	Officer Time	CTM Health Board to devise protocol for involvement of all relevant service areas in supporting learners - e.g. referral and service delivery pathway, including arrangements for transition from paediatric to adult services.	September 2020	December 2020	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed service delivery/graduated response for all relevant Health services with published documentation</li> <li>Strategy agreed and implemented.</li> </ul>	
	Officer Time	Agreed graduated response for all relevant Health Services (paediatric and adult services) to support learners (0 – 25)	December 2020	January 2020	Transformation Lead		
		Devise strategy to raise awareness of the complaints process for Health-based issues	September 2020	December 2020	Transformation Lead		
LA legal departments to increase knowledge of the ALNET Act		Consult legal department on implications of ALN Code for Council Policies and for School Policies, including: admissions; complaints	November 2020	December 2020	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training programme or presentation for legal</li> </ul>	

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and its implications. <b>CTM Joint Project Board</b>	Officer time	Review council policies and model policies commended to governing bodies as required	January 2021	March 2021	ALN Inclusion Lead  Legal department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated policies and protocols in line with ALNET</li> </ul>	
		Raise awareness of implications of the new duties: Governors, Headteachers, Engagement Partners, HR and Social Services	January 2021	March 2021	Transformation Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training programme</li> </ul>	
Develop a regional approach to increase the ALN provision available to Welsh-medium schools.	Officer Time	Deliver regional training programme.	November 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead  Local Authority Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional training programme directory</li> <li>Central resource bank available</li> <li>Regional audit report.</li> </ul>	
	Officer Time	Develop Welsh- medium resources	November 2020	March 2021	LA Inclusion Lead  Local Authority Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional training programme directory</li> <li>Central resource bank available</li> <li>Regional audit report</li> </ul>	

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

12 JULY 2021

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER - LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

##### FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

#### 1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Forward Work Programme (**Appendix A**) for consideration and approval;
- b) Request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Request the Committee to identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3 of this report;
- d) Note that the Forward Work Programme and any feedback from the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC).
- e) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meetings.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.
- 3.2 The Council's Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to then prioritise and schedule.

#### Best Practice / Guidance

- 3.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 3.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximise the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.
- 3.5 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) guide to work effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

*'Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well it can help lay the foundations for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.'*

#### Forward Work Programme

- 3.6 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021, the scheduling of standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees upon: the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Performance, the Corporate Plan, Budget Monitoring, etc. were mapped to the appropriate COSC meeting dates into a draft Forward Work Programme.
- 3.7 The draft Forward work programme for each Scrutiny Committee has been prepared using a number of difference sources, including:
- Corporate Risk Assessment;
  - Directorate Business Plans;
  - Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / Minutes;

- Committee / Member proposed topics;
- Policy Framework;
- Cabinet Work Programme;
- Discussions with Corporate Directors;
- Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.

3.8 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g. the MTFs including draft budget proposals scheduled for consideration in December 2021, following which the COSC will coordinate the conclusions and recommendations from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2022.

3.9 An effective FWP identifies the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The FWP will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with updates from each SOSC FWP and any updated information gathered from FWP meetings with Scrutiny Chairs and Corporate Directors.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

4.1 The Committee approved its Forward Work Programme at its previous meeting.

4.2 The Committee's Forward Work Programme has also been reported to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for coordination and oversight of the overall FWP.

##### Identification of Further Items

4.3 The Committee are reminded of the Criteria Form which Members can use to propose further items for the FWP which the Committee can then consider for prioritisation at a future meeting. The Criteria Form emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation and to ensure a strategic responsibility for Scrutiny and that its work benefits the Authority. There are a number of questions and processes that can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, some of which are set out below:

##### Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

**PUBLIC INTEREST:** The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;

**ABILITY TO CHANGE:** Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence, and which will result in a Cabinet decision being taken;

PERFORMANCE:	Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other agencies, are not performing well;
EXTENT:	Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough;
REPLICATION:	Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

#### Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

- The issue is already being addressed / being examined elsewhere and change is imminent.
- The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and can be referred there).
- Scrutiny involvement would have limited / no impact upon outcomes.
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial to the Council's interest.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic.
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year.
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change.

#### Corporate Parenting

- 4.4 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a Local Authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend.
- 4.5 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects children in care and care leavers, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 4.6 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet-Committee and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.
- 4.7 The Forward Work Programme for this Committee is attached as **Appendix A** for consideration.
- 4.8 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for the previous meetings is attached as **Appendix B**, to track responses to the Committee's recommendations at the previous meetings.
- 5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**
- 5.1 The work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council's Policy

Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
- Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service, Elected Members and members of the public.
- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that the public and stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider and approve the Forward Work Programme attached as **Appendix A**;
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3 of this report.
- d) Note that the Forward Work Programme and any updates from the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of COSC.
- e) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meetings as **Appendix B**.

Kelly Watson  
**CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES**  
6 July 2021

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**Background documents:** None.

**Forward Work Programme  
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1:**

**APPENDIX A**

<b><u>Date of Meeting:</u></b>	<b><u>Report Topics:</u></b>
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup> June 9.30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination report;</li> <li>- Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel report;</li> <li>- Draft Outline Forward Work Programme</li> </ul>
Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2.30pm	Additional Learning Needs Overview
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup> Sep 9.30am	Central South Consortium - how schools are supported at each level and how they balance support.
Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2.30pm	New Curriculum for Wales
	School Governing Bodies
Wed 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec 9.30am	Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2:30pm	How Schools coped with the Pandemic
	Youth Justice Service
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup> Mar 9.30am	Post Inspection Action Plan
	<del>School Modernisation - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B</del>

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## Subject Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee 1

## RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
15 March 2021	<b>Blended Learning in Bridgend Schools since March 2020</b>	The Committee concluded by making a number of recommendations.	Scrutiny	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated to Committee Members.
9 June 2021	<b>Forward Work Programme</b>	Proposed report upon <b>How schools coped with the Pandemic</b> to be added to Forward Work Programme.	Scrutiny	<b>ACTIONED</b> – added to FWP (Appendix A)
		The Committee requested that the Minutes of the last two meetings that Additional Learning Needs (ALN) had been considered, be circulated to Members as background to the report upon ALN for the next meeting on 5 <sup>th</sup> July.	Scrutiny	<b>ACTIONED</b> – Circulated to Members.
		The Committee requested information regarding the Everyone's Invited list of schools within the County Borough.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director EFS	Response awaited.

		The Committee requested assurance regarding Corporate safeguarding procedures in Bridgend.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director EFS	A Member briefing on safeguarding procedures in Bridgend Schools to be arranged in November.
		The Committee requested the statistics for child protection referrals from schools	Scrutiny / Corporate Director EFS	The data is subject to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), however assurance will be provided in the above Briefing.
		The Committee proposed that schools be consulted about topics they would like to see scrutinised.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director EFS	Response awaited.