

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

27 FEBRUARY 2018

REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) REFORM

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with an opportunity to respond to the recommendations made by Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 in respect of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform.

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Helping people to become more self-reliant
- Smarter use of resources

3. Background

- 3.1 At its meeting on 14 September 2017, Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 received a report on ALN and, specifically, the status and development of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill.
- 3.2 At this meeting, members received comprehensive information which included evidence from external, third sector representatives as well as local authority officers.
- 3.3 Following that event, on 19 December 2017, Cabinet received a report from Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 in relation to the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform. This report made several recommendations to Cabinet.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The Committee recommends that:

Any new funding provided by Welsh Government be ring-fenced by the local authority and schools to ensure it is used to meet the needs of the Bill and the needs of young people with ALN.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

At this present time, any funding to be provided by Welsh Government to support the implementation of the ALN Bill is unknown. If the local authority is made aware of any new funding, discussions will be held with a wide range of stakeholders to

ensure that the money available will support the implementation of the ALN Bill and be used appropriately to meet the needs of children and young people with ALN.

In 2016-2017, the ALN Grant for the regional consortium amounted to £250k. Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council ran one of the projects in its entirety so were allocated £66k. The remaining authorities, including Bridgend County Borough Council, received £46k each. In 2017-2018, the ALN Grant has been increased to £300k. Similar arrangements are in place with Merthyr running the same special project for the whole region. Therefore, Merthyr has been allocated £76k with the remaining local authorities receiving £56k each. It is currently not known if the grant will be available in 2018-2019.

There is a regional inclusion group which meets regularly to plan for the implementation of the Bill, share good practice and develop work plans. There are several regional operational groups which also meet to develop specific aspects of activity which will be included in the Bill. Welsh Government has recently invested in regional leads for ALN to drive the implementation of the Bill and also in the development of practice in line with the Bill. These individuals will be based in each consortium area.

4.2 The Committee recommends that:

The local authority identifies and allocates additional specific funding for post-16 ALN provision as an invest-to-save measure.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

There is a new requirement within the Bill which extends our responsibilities to those children/young people with ALN. There will be a single legislative system relating to the support given to children and young people aged between 0 to 25 years who have ALN. This will replace the two separate systems currently operating to support children and young people of compulsory school age who have special educational needs (SEN); and young people in further education who have learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). Welsh Government has also published guidance on post-16 funding for learners with learning difficulties at specialist colleges

4.3 The Committee recommends that:

Cabinet recognises and incorporates the significant role of the educational psychologist in the establishment and delivery of future support and services for those with ALN.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

It is recognised that educational psychologists will continue to have an important role to play as a result of the ALN Reform Bill in supporting and delivering a service for the pupils with ALN. The Educational Psychology Service is fully engaged in the work to prepare for the implementation of the Bill and colleagues from that service lead on several aspects of operational planning.

4.4 The Committee recommends that:

Cabinet considers apprenticeships as a method for young people with ALN to progress into employment.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

Young people with ALN need to be able to progress into employment in order to thrive in life. Apprenticeships are just one method of achieving this. Currently, local authority officers are working in partnership with Bridgend College to ensure that opportunities are afforded to young people with ALN with regards to Supported Internships (see Appendices A, B and C), but this is only one aspect of progression we are actively working to improve.

4.5 The Committee recommends that:

With reference to recommendations at paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2, suitable support and resources be allocated to support frontline staff such as additional learning needs coordinators (ALNCos) and teachers in order to ensure they are able to deal with the extra responsibilities under the Bill and manage with increased workloads.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

Significant training has been delivered by local authority officers to ALNCos within primary and secondary schools in Bridgend. The Inclusion Service has worked collaboratively with other local authorities utilising the ALN Innovation Fund in order to prepare school staff in advance of the ALN Reform Bill being implemented. Continued support and advice will be provided by local authority to school staff including headteachers and governors and in conjunction with the new role of the ALN Transformation Lead for Central South Consortium (CSC).

4.6 The Committee recommends that:

Allowance be made for the associated costs for frontline staff based on the expected need for job evaluation on any new appointments or additional duties.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

The job evaluation process and criteria have been agreed and applied across the authority for several years. All new posts or changes to posts will be subject to job evaluation.

4.7 The Committee recommends that:

The local authority works towards ensuring that a minimum of 80% of the budget allocated to ALN pupils is delegated to individual schools and that mechanisms should be in place to ensure those schools are using the funding for its stated purpose of supporting ALN.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

The local authority delegated schools budget rate is above 80% and we are committed to ensuring that as much of any budget allocated to ALN pupils is

delegated to individual schools. However, pupils with ALN need a wide range of services to support them and these services are not all provided by schools.

We can assure Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 that funding allocated for the support of children with ALN is all used to support those children in the best way we can.

4.8 The Committee recommends that:

The local authority considers how home-to-school transport arrangements will be affected as part of the new provisions contained in the Bill.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

It is not currently known if the Bill will affect the (Learner) Travel Wales Measure 2008. Once any implications or changes are known, we will undertake a review of our policies in line with those changes.

4.9 The Committee recommends that:

The local authority learns from best practice from local authorities within Wales and beyond to improve the academic performance of those young people with ALN achieving level 2 threshold inclusive which currently stands at 26.3%.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

The Inclusion Service is working closely with colleagues across the regional consortium area to develop and share good practice in relation to all areas of ALN education. In addition, we actively engage with the ADEW Inclusion Group and, on an all-Wales footprint, there is a keen appetite to ensure consistent, coherent excellent practice in this area nationally.

In addition, there is a wealth of expertise shared from other areas of the UK and internationally where applicable. Our special school headteachers are fully engaged in SWASSH (South Wales Association of Special School Headteachers) where new and innovative ideas are shared.

4.10 The Committee recommends that:

The local authority assesses the required resources, workforce planning and training arrangements to support implementation of the Bill.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

The local authority, in collaboration with Central South Consortium (CSC), is currently considering workforce implications with regards to the Sensory Service. This work will be supported by a Welsh Government grant. This work will be extended to encompass the wider workforce involved in the implementation of the ALN Reform Bill.

The Welsh Government Training Expert Group will work with the ALN Transformation Leads and local authority officers to ensure that all stakeholders are fully prepared for the implementation of the ALN Reform Bill.

4.11 The Committee recommends that:

The local authority looks to strengthen its relationship with the further education (FE) sector in Bridgend to make the provisions of the Bill work effectively; especially in the challenging transition to further education and work-based learning.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

The local authority has established a transition board to strengthen relationships, policies and procedures in relation to the FE sector and work-based learning. The ALN innovation Fund has supported the board in developing a 'map and gap' analysis and transition protocols.

4.12 The Committee recommends that:

The local authority explores whether any work has been carried out in the third sector on analysis of the resulting costs associated with support for adults who have not had sufficient educational provision as a young person. Furthermore, that if this has not already been undertaken by those in the third sector that the local authority looks to commission an independent analysis of these associated costs, both directly to the local authority as well as indirectly to other public services. Such an analysis would help put the costs of supporting children with ALN into perspective.

Officers' response for Cabinet's consideration is as follows:

We are not aware of any work which has been carried out in the third sector to analyse the costs associated with support for adults who have not had sufficient educational provision as a young person. As part of the regional work, the Inclusion Service will explore this to see if the work has been undertaken elsewhere and if so, what conclusion can be reached from that data.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications directly attached to this report. An initial screening Equality Impact Assessment will be completed, and a full screening will be undertaken in due course in relation to the implementation of the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill.

7. Financial implications

7.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report. However, any future developments and changes within the local authority in response to the Bill will have associated financial implications.

8. Recommendation

8.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- note and consider officers' responses to the recommendations at paragraph 4 from Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 in relation to the local authority's response to the ALN Reform Bill.

Lindsay Harvey

Interim Corporate Director Education and Family Support

Contact Officer: Michelle Hatcher
Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement

Telephone: (01656) 815258

E-mail: michelle.hatcher@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Bridgend County Borough Council
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Background documents

Appendix (i) Report to Cabinet (19 December 2017) - ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) REFORM – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

Appendix (ii) Report to Scrutiny (18 September 2017) - ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) REFORM

Appendix A Supported internships for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) – briefing paper

Appendix B Frequently asked questions about supported internship schemes for young people with learning disabilities:

Appendix C Supported internship executive summary

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

19 DECEMBER 2017

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) REFORM – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

1. Purpose of Report.

1.2 The purpose of the report is to:

- a) Present Cabinet with the recommendations of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 on the subject of ALN Reform;
- b) Ask Cabinet to forward a small number of recommendations from the Committee to Welsh Government for consideration as part of the implementation of the Bill and ALN Reform.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 This report relates to the following Corporate Priorities:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Helping people to become more self-reliant
- Smarter use of resources

3. Background.

3.1 At its meeting on 14 September 2017, the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 received a report on ALN and specifically the status and development of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill.

At this meeting Members received evidence from external third sector representatives as well as Officers.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 Following their consideration of the item and the evidence received, the Committee agreed to make a series of comments and recommendations for submission to the Education and Family Support Directorate as well as two recommendations to be forwarded to Welsh Government for consideration in the development of ALN Reform.

4.2 Recommendations to Cabinet

The Committee recommend that:

- k. Any new funding provided by Welsh Government be ring-fenced by the Local Authority and Schools to ensure it is used to meet the needs of the Bill and the needs of young people with ALN;
- l. The Authority identify and allocate additional specific funding for Post-16 ALN provision as an invest to save measure;
- m. Cabinet recognise and incorporate the significant role of the Educational Psychologist in the establishment and delivery of future support and services for those with ALN;
- n. Cabinet consider apprenticeships as a method for young people with ALN to progress into employment;
- o. With reference to recommendations a) and b), suitable support and resources be allocated to support frontline staff such as ALNCOs and Teachers in order to ensure they are able to deal with the extra responsibilities under the Bill and manage with increased workloads;
- p. Allowance be made for the associated costs for frontline staff based on the expected need for Job Evaluation on any new appointments or additional duties;
- q. The Authority works towards ensuring that a minimum of 80% of the budget allocated to ALN pupils is delegated to individual schools and that mechanisms should be in place to ensure those schools are using the funding for its stated purpose of supporting ALN;
- r. The Local Authority considers how home to school transport arrangements will be affected as part of the new provisions contained in the Bill;
- s. The Authority learns from best practice from local authorities from Wales and beyond in an effort to improve the academic performance of those young people with ALN achieving level 2 threshold inclusive which currently stands at 26.3%;
- t. The Authority assesses the required resources, workforce planning and training arrangements to support implementation of the Bill;
- u. The Authority looks to strengthen its relationship with the FE sector in Bridgend to make the provisions of the Bill work effectively, especially in the challenging transition to further education and work-based learning.
- v. The Authority explore whether any work has been carried out in the third sector on analysis of the resulting costs associated with support for adults who have not had sufficient educational provision as a young person. Furthermore that if this has not already been undertaken by those in the third Sector that the Authority look to commission an independent analysis of these associated costs, both directly to the LA as well as indirectly to other public services. Such an analysis would help put the costs of supporting children with ALN into perspective;

4.3 Recommendations to Welsh Government

- a) That budgeted gross expenditure on ALN provision for 2018/19 be increased in preparation for the implementation of the new legislation to assist in the transition period;
- b) That job coaching schemes be considered for introduction in Wales, based on the success experienced in England for young people with ALN accessing work through such schemes;
- c) That more funding and provision be provided in Wales for schemes such as 'Access to Work' to assist individuals with Additional Learning Needs in gaining employment;

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & 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 Impact Assessment

There are no equality implications directly attached to this report, however equality impact assessments will be necessary for any future developments within the Authority in relation to the implementation of the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill.

7. Financial Implications.

There are no financial implications directly associated with this report however any future developments and changes within the Authority in response to the Bill and in response to the recommendations of the Committee will have associated financial implications.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- a) Consider the recommendations at paragraph 4.2 from the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 in relation to the Authority's response to the ALN Bill and ALN Reform;
- b) Forward the recommendations at paragraph 4.3 above from the Subject OVS Committee 1 to Welsh Government, for consideration as part of the implementation of the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill and ALN Reform.

Andrew Jolley
Corporate Director, Operational and Partnership Services

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: (01656) 643613

E-mail: Scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend.
CF31 4WB

Background documents

Reports and Minutes – Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 - 14 September 2017

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

18 SEPTEMBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY
SUPPORT**

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) REFORM

1. Purpose of report

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

- the developments of the ALN reform in Wales and how as a local authority we are preparing for its introduction;
- the status of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill; and
- information regarding career pathways for pupils with ALN.

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report relates to the following Corporate Plan priorities:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Helping people to become more self-reliant
- Smarter use of resources

3. Background

3.1 The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill was introduced into the National Assembly for Wales on 12 December 2016.

3.2 During 2017, the Bill has been working its way through the first stage of the process, which is the consultation phase and scrutiny of the general principles of the Bill.

3.3 The Bill makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs. This is to replace existing legislation surrounding special educational needs and the assessment of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in post-16 education and training.

3.4 The Bill also continues the existence of the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales and provides for children, their parents and young people to appeal to it

against decisions made in relation to their or their child's additional learning needs, but renames it the Education Tribunal for Wales.

3.5 The Bill identifies the role of Dedicated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DELCO) in Health, who has a statutory duty to consider if a relevant treatment or service is likely to be of benefit.

3.6 The ten aims of the Bill are as follows:

- **The introduction of the term 'additional learning needs' (ALN)**
The Bill replaces the terms 'special educational needs' (SEN) and 'learning difficulties and/or disabilities' (LDD) with the new term ALN.
- **0 to 25 age range**
There will be a single legislative system relating to the support given to children and young people aged between 0 to 25 years who have ALN. This is instead of the two separate systems currently operating to support children and young people of compulsory school age who have SEN; and young people in further education who have LDD.
- **A unified plan**
The Bill will create a single statutory plan (the individual development plan) (IDP) to replace the existing variety of statutory and non-statutory SEN or LDD plans for learners in schools and further education.
- **Increased participation of children and young people**
The Bill requires that learners' views should always be considered as part of the planning process, along with those of their parents/carers. It is imperative that children and young people see the planning process as something which is done with them rather than to them.
- **High aspirations and improved outcomes**
The emphasis of IDPs will be on making provision that delivers tangible outcomes that contribute in a meaningful way to the child or young person's achievement of their full potential.
- **A simpler and less adversarial system**
The process of producing and revising an IDP should be much simpler than is currently the case with statements of SEN.

Consideration is being given by Welsh Government on how to phase in IDPs for children and young people who have ALN in line with the ALN Reform Bill. These pupils are currently identified as being School Action, School Action Plus of the Code of Practice (2004) or may have a statement of special educational needs. Currently, only 2.7% of children and young people in Wales have a statement of special educational needs, whereas the new system provides a statutory plan for around 22% of learners with an additional learning need aged between 0-25 years. Children and young people who have a statement of special educational needs identifying provision, for example, for ancillary support, should be entitled to the same additional learning provision (ALP) when their statement is converted into an IDP. The review and monitoring of the provision will remain the same.

- **Increased collaboration**
The new system will encourage improved collaboration and information sharing between agencies, which are essential to ensuring that needs are identified early and the right support is put in place to enable children and young people to achieve positive outcomes.
- **Avoiding disagreements and earlier disagreement resolution**
The new system will focus on ensuring that where disagreements occur about an IDP or the provision it contains, the matter is considered and resolved at the most local level possible.
- **Clear and consistent rights of appeal**
Where disagreements about the contents of an IDP cannot be resolved at the local level, the Bill will ensure that children and young people entitled to an IDP (and their parents/carers in the case of those that are under 16 years) will have a right of appeal to a tribunal.
- **ALN Code**
The code will ensure that the new ALN system has a set of clear, legally enforceable parameters within which local authorities and those other organisations responsible for the delivery of services for children and young people with ALN.

- 3.7 Welsh Government has published a suite of materials to help those interested understand the reforms and how they might work in practice. As the Bill passes through the legislative process and moves into the implementation phase, more guidance will become available.
- 3.8 Welsh Government has made available two drafts of the Code of Practice. The first was during the consultation on the draft Bill in 2015, and the second in February 2017 to aid scrutiny of the Bill. The next draft will be the version that is published for consultation, which is expected to happen early in 2018. The consultation responses will be used to make the necessary amendments to the code which will then be published. However, the existing duties within the current SEN code of practice will need to be met until the new system is formally implemented.
- 3.9 In addition to the Bill, there is also a wider ALN transformation programme to support the ALN reform. In February 2017, the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language published a written ministerial statement announcing £20m investment in ALN to support all partners to successfully implement and deliver the new system. £1.1m of that investment is being provided via the ALN Innovation Fund, which is a pre-legislative grant to support collaborative projects between a wide range of agencies involved in supporting learners with ALN. It aims to support the identification and development of innovative practice which improves systems, arrangements and relationships in readiness for roll-out of the forthcoming legislative changes. The learning from the projects funded by the grant scheme will be shared across Wales and will provide a key opportunity to develop ways of working consistent with the reforms and influence the approach to transformation and implementation.

- 3.10 As part of the wider ALN Transformation Programme there has been a focus upon the workforce development. There is a programme of skills development for education practitioners focused at three levels:
- Core skills development for all practitioners to support a wide range of low complexity, high incidence ALN within settings and access to ongoing professional development. This includes the roll-out of person-centred practice (PCP), which is a central aspect of the new approach, across all education settings. A two year funding grant has been provided to local authorities and further education institutions for developing PCP skills across the workforce.
 - Advanced skills development through the development of the role of Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCo), who will replace current Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCoS).
 - Specialist skills development through a national workforce planning system for local authority-provided specialist support services available to education settings, for example, educational psychologists or teachers of the visually or hearing impaired.
- 3.11 Another strand of the wider ALN transformation programme is focused on policy and guidance to ensure that good practice is supported and embedded in the current special educational needs (SEN) systems as well as the future system. During 2017, Welsh Government has published guidance on:
- post-16 funding for learners with learning difficulties at specialist colleges;
 - the role of the SENCo;
 - supporting learners with specific learning difficulties; and
 - supporting learners with healthcare needs.
- 3.12 A consultation on options for implementing the ALN Bill closed on 9 June 2017. The responses to the consultation will be analysed and published during autumn 2017 alongside the Welsh Government's response.
- 3.13 Welsh Government has outlined how the Bill will affect local authorities.
- Local authorities will be responsible for learners with ALN from the age of 0 to 25, ensuring they can access suitable education and/or training, including compulsory education and specialist post-16 education or training where necessary.
 - If a child or young person who has an IDP moves to a different local authority in Wales, the responsibility for assessing and identifying provision to support his/her needs transfers to the local authority where he/she resides. In England where legislation is different, the IDP will be converted into an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).
 - The process for transferring the IDP from one local authority to another should be similar to that of the existing arrangements for a statement of special educational needs, where there is close liaison between authorities. The ALP should be replicated where possible. However, it is recognised that local arrangements and provision may differ from one local authority to another across Wales and in England. Therefore, the ALP will need to be determined by the local authority where the pupil will be residing. For a young person transitioning from a school to a further education establishment (FEI) the same

processes should apply. An ALP should be needs led not service / establishment led. IDPs should always aim to identify the ALP that delivers tangible outcomes that contribute in a meaningful way to the child or young person's achievement of their full potential.

- The ALN Code will impose mandatory requirements on local authorities in respect of information and advice services; independent advocacy services; the preparation content, form, review and revision of IDPs ceasing to maintain.
- All children, their parents and young people up to the age of 25 years will have the right to the Education Tribunal against decisions made by a local authority in relation to their ALN or their IDP. Local authorities must provide access to independent advocacy services.
- IDPs will replace the existing variety of statutory and non-statutory plans for learners of compulsory school age and below and those over compulsory school age in school or further education. Local authorities will normally only prepare and maintain an IDP in instances where the child or young person's needs are more severe or complex. Ordinarily IDPs will be the responsibility of the maintained school or further education institution.
- Local authorities must provide children, young people and others with information and advice about ALN and the new system, and ensure that it is accessible for all who need it.
- Arrangements must be made by local authorities for avoiding and resolving disagreements. If disagreements arise, local authorities' arrangements should ensure they are resolved at the earliest opportunity and at the most local level.
- Where a local authority requests help or information from another body in the exercise of any of their ALN functions, that body should comply with the request.

4. Current situation

- 4.1 The Bill is currently at stage 2. This stage of the process was reached in June 2017. Stage 2 is an amending stage, and has a greater focus on the detail and specific areas for amendment.
- 4.2 The Bill is expected to complete its National Assembly for Wales stages by the end of 2017 with Royal Assent following early in 2018. It is at this point when Welsh Government will shift their focus to the secondary legislation, in particular the new Code of Practice. The ALN Code will replace the current SEN Code of Practice and will inform people of their legal duties, it will be the handbook for the new system.
- 4.3 The aim is to have the complete package of the new law and the ALN Code approved and in place by the end of 2018. From early 2019, there will then be an extensive programme of continuing professional development on the basis of the new code, ahead of roll-out from September 2019. This all assumes no delays to the legislative process for the Bill and the consultation and assembly consideration of the secondary legislation runs to time.
- 4.4 Welsh Government has been working closely with partners to refine the approach to transition. An announcement was made in February 2017 that there will be funding for five additional learning needs transformation leads to support the delivery of the programme. These transformation leads will be recruited and will take up post during the 2017-2018 financial year. Four of the transformation leads will operate regionally, on the education consortia footprint, and one of the leads will work as a

further education transformation lead on a national basis. These leads will be critical in ensuring that services will be prepared to operate the new additional learning needs system with regards to Welsh Government's overall implementation strategy. They will be involved in playing a co-ordinating role; oversee training and awareness-raising and play a key part in facilitating improvements in multi-agency working. Another key role will be to raise awareness of the Bill as it continues to progress through the National Assembly and they will support local authorities; schools; early years settings and colleges to put plans in place at an early stage of implementation. An important consideration will be also to explore quality assurance frameworks and lines of accountability for local authorities, consortia and schools.

4.5 As a local authority, Bridgend has been working in collaboration with the other four local authorities in the Central South Consortium to prepare for the ALN Reform Bill. The first focus area the collaboration focused on was training staff in each of the local authorities around the person centered planning approach and the development of a one page profile which supports the development of the IDP.

4.6 The second wave of collaboration has been with regards to the ALN Innovation Fund projects which are currently being developed. The projects are as follows:

- **Project 1- Transition planning between education settings, out of education and into social care and into adult life. The capacity of local post-16 provision with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD).**

Bridgend's Inclusion Service has established a local project board to develop a post-16 transition protocol and to audit learners' needs at every transition point. A map and gap analysis has been undertaken with the focus upon what is working well; what changes need to be made; what are the gaps in provision and to reflect upon and update the process map.

- **Project 2 – The capacity of ALNCOs/SENCOs in providing support to classroom staff, including skills development.**

An analysis of need has been undertaken to plan and deliver training for every ALNCO in all Bridgend schools regarding PCP and IDPs. Nine ALNCOs have been identified from all schools in Bridgend to continue to roll out training for the other ALNCOs with a 'train the trainer' model of approach. This will ensure that ALNCOs are fully trained in preparation for the ALN Reform Bill and that the training is sustainable. Training has also been delivered to Bridgend College which supports the developing collaboration surrounding the ALN Reform Bill.

The Bill does not specifically name ALNCOs as the person responsible for assessing a child or young person at school. A variety of different agencies, professional and individuals have a role in identifying and assessing young people who have an ALN. If a child or young person is identified as having an ALN, which calls for ALP then an IDP should be prepared stating the nature of the ALN and the level of provision to support the needs of the child. A graduated response to need should always be followed by the school staff, considering differentiated teaching and strategies in the first instance.

The ALNCo will specifically be responsible for ensuring that all learners who have an ALN have an IDP. They will not be required to develop every IDP. Any teacher can be involved in doing that. However, ALNCo's will be responsible for overseeing the provision across the educational setting to meet the needs identified in the IDP.

- **Project 3 – The capacity of special schools to act as specialist support to mainstream schools and the capacity of local authority-based specialist services to support learners in early years, maintained schools and FEIs.**

Ysgol Bryn Castell along with the Behaviour and Wellbeing Team are in the process of upskilling mainstream teachers and staff in schools to manage challenging behaviour. Behaviour champions have been identified in all primary and secondary schools and building capacity within schools will continue.

Heronbridge Special School delivered a conference with a focus upon upskilling mainstream and observation class teachers to support pupils with complex autism spectrum disorder (ASD) needs, addressing communication, sensory and behavioural issues.

- **Project 4 – Practice and arrangements for resolving disagreements and avoiding disputes.**

The focus of this project is to further embed best practice in disagreement avoidance and resolution across Central South Consortium. Also, to consider a service level agreement for mediation and to ensure sustainability through the development of a train the trainer approach across the region. It should be noted that there will be a cost implication for the mediation service.

- 4.7 To ensure that individual pupils' needs are met and appropriate progress is made pathways are continuing to be strengthened. These pathways involve mainstream schools (ie Ysgol Bryn Castell, Heronsbridge Special School and Bridgend College).
- 4.8 The point of transition into employment for pupils with ALN is an area which needs further development. There is currently consideration being given to develop progression routes to employment for young people with ALN in the form of supported internships. The supported internship progression route is designed to develop the skills of the individual, encourage employers to review their job roles and recruitment practices in order to consider this group of potential workers. The purpose is also to promote self-esteem and worth in the learner and ultimately place them in a job and therefore increasing their chances of independent living and making a contribution to their community. The briefing paper attached at Appendix A outlines the background; purpose and benefits of supported internships. Attached at Appendix B are frequently asked questions regarding supported internships and the executive summary of the nature and purpose of supported internships is attached at Appendix C.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 An initial screening Equality Impact Assessment will be completed and a full screening will be undertaken in due course.

7. Financial implications

7.1 Welsh Government has provided funding for local authorities to develop the person centered planning approach. As part of Central South Consortium, Bridgend received £26k over a two-year period to develop this approach with staff within Bridgend. This continues to be embedded as key staff have been trained to cascade the approach in order to provide sustainability.

7.2 As part of the transformation programme, Welsh Government has provided funding via the ALN Innovation Fund, which is a pre-legislative grant to support collaborative projects between a wide range of agencies involved in supporting learners with ALN. Bridgend has worked in collaboration with the other four local authorities in the consortium to develop projects to support the transition for the ALN Reform Bill. Each local authority received £50k during 2016-2017 and upon the completion of the projects during 2017-2018 will each receive a further £60k.

7.3 There is some uncertainty regarding the cost of implementing the ALN Reform Bill with regards to the extension of the age range from 0-25 and also the possible increase of IDPs and the associated costs.

8. Recommendation

8.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to:

note the content of this report in relation to the ALN Reform; and to consider and agree any recommendations the committee may wish to make consistent with its challenge and support role in light of this report.

Lindsay Harvey
Interim Corporate Director - Education and Family Support
18 September 2017

Contact Officer: Michelle Hatcher
Group Manager, Inclusion and School Improvement

Telephone: (01656) 815258

E-mail: michelle.hatcher@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4BW

Background documents

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill timetable.

<http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?lId=16496>

Welsh Government publications

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/additional-learning-special-educational-needs/transformation-programme/awareness-raising/?lang=en>

Person-Centred Planning document

<http://learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/person-centred-practice-guide/?lang=en>