

**Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2****Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (ALNET) Act 2018  
October 2018.**Members recommended:

- The Committee were concerned that the report indicated that only one additional member of staff is to be employed, members felt that as the implementation won't begin until 2020, that this is something that should be monitored in the future and the Committee recommended receiving regular updates on this.

**Local authority officer response:**

There will be continued scrutiny and monitoring through the Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement's attendance at the monthly Project Board with regards to the ALN Implementation Plan. In addition, monthly meetings will continue to be held to monitor local activity and need via Bridgend Local Authority's action plan.

- Members recommended that if not already done so that the ALN funding is ring-fenced to implement the provisions within the Act, so that it is only used for that stated purpose.

**Local authority officer response:**

This recommendation will be considered and referred for further discussion to a future BREP panel.

- Members also recommended that this be referred to the BREP panel.

**Local authority officer response:**

This recommendation is accepted and the item of ALN funding will be referred to a future BREP panel.

Further Information requested

- Members asked for clarity around the responsibilities under the act as to who is responsible for completing assessments - what is the legal responsibility of the partners undertaking assessments and what legal redress and means of scrutiny does the authority have if they fail to deliver?

**Local authority officer response:**

Welsh Government has been contacted and officers are awaiting a response.

- Members noted that funding allocations on page 36 did not add up. Liz Jones to come back to members, as this was believed to be a clerical error.

**Local authority response:**

The grant that was available for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 was the ALN Innovation Grant the value of which was £550,000 across both years. This was made up of £250k in 2016-2017 and £300k in 2017-2018 as per the breakdown below;

	Merthyr	RCT	CCBC	Vale	BCBC	TOTAL
16/17	66,000	46,000	46,000	46,000	46,000	250,000
17/18	76,000	56,000	56,000	56,000	56,000	300,000

The purpose of this grant was to develop and promote innovative, multi-agency and cross sector working practices to support learners with ALN. This grant ended on the 31 March 2018 and a new grant became available for 2018- 2019 called the ALN Transformation grant. RCT lead on this grant which is to be used across the region to support the delivery of the ALN transformation programme, including the preparing for and managing the implementation of the ALNET Act. The value of this new grant £783,000 for the whole region as detailed in the implementation plan

- Members raised concern whether the Act would be funded correctly and the potential risk to the implementation of the bill if WG funding isn't transferred to LA's to implement it. The committee agreed to support the cabinet member on this, reiterating the importance of long term funding to be allocated to support the bill.

**Local authority officer response:**

Welsh Government has been contacted and officers are awaiting a response.

- Officers have offered to provide a note to the committee on the specific funding allocated for Post 16 ALN provision.

**Local authority officer response:**

The following are a number of funding streams that support ALN progression post-16 and these depend on the educational setting attended by the learner.

Route 1 – Heronsbridge Special School: the post-16 learners here will almost always have been in the school in key stage 4 and earlier. Through the assessment of their needs a funding tariff will have been applied to the student and this will continue with them through the school until they leave post-18 or 19. There is no additional income/uplift in recognition that they are now sixth form students.

Route 2 – Ysgol Bryn Castell: students in the sixth form come from a variety of directions including key stage 4 in Ysgol Bryn Castell, The Bridge Alternative Provision, direct from mainstream schools and sometimes from out of authority. For those learners already registered at Ysgol Bryn Castell, their funding tariff will continue as before and is available up to age 19 similar to Heronsbridge Special School. For students arriving from mainstream or out of authority, the school undertakes an assessment of need and determines an appropriate funding tariff which is then applicable for the student's time in the sixth form at Ysgol Bryn Castell.

Route 3 – Bridgend College: recruits learners with ALN from mainstream, usually at 16, or from the special schools at 18 or 19. On entry to college their needs are assessed and they are placed on programmes with relatively high tariffs compared to general education (A level) programmes. The directory programme page for ‘Preparation for life and work’ from Welsh Government shows that the tariff varies from £5,711 to £9,491 compared to approximately £3,500 for general education. In addition, the college can draw down further support in line with specific diagnoses.

There will also be young people on vocational programmes funded against the relevant tariff for that sector in the directory. The college will assess individual need and assign/ apply for additional support as necessary.

Route 4 – Sixth forms: whilst sixth forms may contain students with ALN there is no specific additional funding to support them in that setting. They will be funded against the general education programmes. The majority of arrangements will be linked to meeting their needs at examination time (extra time allowance etc.) otherwise the school will use its own resources as it considers appropriate.

Route 5 - Traineeships: some young people with ALN will benefit from an Entry Level/ Level 1 traineeship programme delivered by local training providers. In order to access this provision the young person will be referred by Careers Wales.

Careers Wales: have specialist careers advisers with excellent knowledge of the potential progression routes for young people with ALN including into the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. Careers Wales is a key partner in planning the transition arrangements for young people with ALN especially those with statements.

- Members highlighted that whilst the report is detailed; it was littered with strategic terminology and asked what change those at the heart of this particular service delivery will expect to see as part of this legislation. LH to supply supplementary guidance in respect of the act.

**Local authority response:**

Guidance and developments with regards to the ALNET Act are available on the Welsh Government website. The implementation of the Individual Development Plan (IDP) is published on the Welsh Government website. The draft Code of Practice is out for consultation during autumn term 2018.

- In respect of allocation of grant funds, whilst it is accepted that the grant is based on self-evaluation members asked for the formula that WG applied before these grant figures were publicised to be provided.

**Local authority response:**

Welsh Government has been contacted and officers are awaiting a response

- Members raised concern that, as anybody up to the age of 25 will be eligible to have an assessment should they request one – What plans were in place for the Authority to cope with the demand?

**Local authority officer response:**

ALNCos and headteachers have undertaken the initial training with the ALN Transformation Lead. There was a focus upon the children who are already in the system and which children would require an IDP. This work will be on-going. Local authority statementing officers have attended the first round of training with the ALN Transformation Lead and will continue to be part of a working party.

- Furthermore, whilst members appreciated that some of these young people will be in further education, some will not and concern was raised by members as to who has responsibility for these young people, how is contact going to be made with them and how will they be helped?

**Local authority officer response:**

The key partner in this context is Careers Wales. They have responsibility for working with young people across post-16 transition and 16-18 and assisting them to access appropriate progression pathways. They maintain a database that captures the details of these young people and work with a range of agencies to find places for young people who are not in employment education and training (NEET) and need support to find a learning pathway.

- Based on current service delivery, if the service delivery increases there should be flexibility in WG to increase the grant funding. Is this formula, criteria, self-evaluation and self-analysis dynamic in nature so that it can be modified if further demand is identified?

**Local authority officer response:**

An explanation is provided below with regards to the ALN Transformation Grant

**ALN transformation grant**

This is the second financial year of the four financial years that the grant will be available. The money is delegated via a host local authority acting on behalf of the 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.

**The conditions of the ALN Transformation Grant**

The ALN transformation grant should be used by the host local authority to employ a regional ALN transformation lead. The transformation lead is responsible for the delivery of a strategic programme of work agreed by local authorities to support preparation by consortia, maintained early years settings, schools, further education institutes and local health boards of the duties conferred to them by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, and to ensure financial accountability.

For this financial year (2018-2019) the total budget for the transformation grant is £3.2m. This is allocated as a fixed amount (£125k for each region) to cover three prescribed purposes with the remaining budget (£2.7m) provided to cover a fourth purpose. This £2.7m and is allocated on a formula basis, with a 70% weighting for pupil numbers (aged 5-15) and 30% weighting for school numbers. This amount therefore varies between the host authorities. Using the January 2018 PLASC data this equates to a split of 24% for the GwE region; 29% for the ERW region; 29% for the Central South region; and 18% for the South East region. This will be reviewed however using the latest PLASC data each year and so the exact weighting may change accordingly.

- Members noted that data collection was a non-statutory obligation in respect of ALN and that we would tap into other LAs. Therefore members recommend that it should be noted as an important facet of the methodology that should be used to measure and compare impact.

**Local authority officer response:**

The local authority recognises the importance of data capture and analysis. This will continue to be a focus of development.