



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board

18 March, 2021

Report of the Head of Transformation Andrew Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All

Additional Learning Needs Information Management System

Purpose of the Report

- To provide Members with further information in relation to new legislation and statutory guidance for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) as set out in the ALNET Act and draft Code of Practice for ALN, with specific regard to mandatory ALN management systems.
- To provide Members with information and progress in relation to developing an online management platform for Individual Development Plans (IDPs) and a local authority electronic provision map, to meet the local authority's (LA) statutory duties.

- To inform Members that due diligence has been undertaken and that value for money has been obtained for the Council.
- To request Members' approval to proceed with procuring the contract with CACI Limited in order to implement an ALN case management and IDP solution.

Executive Summary:

Members have previously received a report and seminar which set out Welsh Government's objectives for transformation from the current system for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) of statutory schools age, to a unified system for supporting learners from 0 to 25 years of age with ALN. This includes creating a single statutory plan to replace current statutory and non-statutory plans which will be known as Individual Development Plans (IDPs). The report provided Members with an overview of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET), an overview of the draft Code of Practice for ALN and the wider implications for local authorities in implementing the transformation programme.

This report will provide an update on activity and timescales in relation to the requirement for all local authorities to develop online management systems, to support a platform for electronic IDPs for children and young people (C&YP) with ALN. In addition to this there is a requirement to develop a provision mapping tool, which will support the LAs ability to further monitor progress and provision for C&YP with ALN.

Background:

The Welsh Government has published new timescales for the implementation of the ALNET Act, including the conversion of plans for C&YP with ALN. A new draft Code for ALN has recently been laid before the Senedd and will be discussed in a plenary session at the end of this month.

The new legislation will be implemented from September 2021, with the phased introduction of IDPs to replace all statutory and non-statutory plans. LAs are currently preparing for a period of transformation from 2020 to 2023. During this time there will be a requirement to work within two legal systems. The current system will be phased out entirely by September 2024.

The LA Inclusion Service has been working towards implementation both at a local, regional and national level.

The Inclusion Service has engaged with regional partners, our internal I.T. department and two external companies to determine the best possible ALN information management solution for NPT. As a result of this work and in line with the LAs procurement processes, CACI Impulse Limited has been identified as the most suitable provider.

This provider will assist NPTC in overseeing, managing and building capability in ALN provision across all education establishments, helping create an inclusive, unified ALN service for learners from 0-25 years. The system incorporates a bilingual, structured and portable IDP record, configured specifically for the Welsh ALN Code, practice and process context. It also adheres to the minimum requirements as set out in recent Welsh Government communication to local authorities.

Furthermore, it will support current processes including:

- the conversion to a paperless system for all services within Inclusion
- the development of a sophisticated provision map to monitor the effectiveness of ALN provision and value for money for the LA
- the streamlining of panel processes and referral systems
- the efficient and safe sharing of information with key partners
- improved communication and collaboration between the LA and parents/carers

- supporting a person centred and outcome focussed approach, ensuring that the LA is adhering to the principles of the new Code

Financial Impacts:

- Additional expenditure will be incurred as a consequence of the proposed recommendations. The cost for the 3 year contract is as follows:

Year 1

Implementation - £17,400

Training - £12,600

Annual maintenance costs - £15,500

Year 2

Annual maintenance costs – £15,810

Year 3

Annual Maintenance costs - £16,126

Total cost Year 1 - £45,500

Total 3 year cost - £77,436

- Welsh Government have communicated that they will distribute funding across all local authorities in Wales to cover the majority of costs for Year 1. Welsh Government are anticipating further funding for years 2 and 3 (to be confirmed).

Following the grant allocation to support this work, future funding will be sourced from the Inclusion budget.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

‘A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under

the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below.'

This system will have a positive impact on all stakeholders and ensures the LA meets its statutory duties as set out in the ALNET Act and Code of Practice for ALN, to be implemented from September 2021.

**Valleys Communities Impacts:
No implications**

**Workforce Impacts:
No implications**

Legal Impacts:

The proposed information management system to be provided by CACI Limited will ensure that the LA is discharging its legal duties as set out in the ALNET Act and new Code of Practice for ALN.

CACI Limited will be appointed through a direct award through the G Cloud Framework. Therefore this contract will be let in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (rule 7.3).

Risk Management Impacts:

Please see attached Integrated Impact Assessment.

Risks associated with failing to implement the proposed recommendations:

- Delay in securing appropriate ALN Information management system
- Risk of the local authority not adhering to mandatory requirements to implement an online IDP and provision map system
- Risk of LA not complying with its statutory duties as set out in the ALNET Act and new Code of Practice for ALN from September 2021

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Officers from the Inclusion Service have worked in close collaboration with internal departments, including Legal, Data, Data Governance and IT to support and inform its decision making.

Recommendations:

That authority be delegated to the Head of Transformation to proceed to enter the Council into the contractual arrangements proposed above.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

That the authority are able to proceed with contractual arrangements with CACI Limited in readiness for implementation of new legislation.

Implementation of Decision:

- **The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period**

Appendices:

Integrated Impact Assessment

Officer Contact:

Andrew Thomas Head of Transformation

a.d.thomas@npt.gov.uk

Hayley Lervy Co-ordinator for Inclusion
h.lervy@npt.gov.uk