

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA(L)/KW/0528/17

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cc. Lynne Neagle AM
Chair

Children, Young People and Education Committee
SeneddCYPE@assembly.wales

11th December 2017

Dear Simon,

I am writing to provide a further update about the £20m package of investment in the additional learning needs transformation programme, which was announced earlier this year. In March, the then Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language wrote to you about the funding package, and highlighted that the indicative budget allocations were likely to change as a result of ongoing engagement and consultation with delivery partners.

At his appearance before your Committee on 21st September, the then Minister undertook to write to the Committee outlining how the £20 million package of support for additional learning needs will facilitate and support the implementation of the Bill, including how it will be profiled for local authorities, and to provide you with information on how implementation of the Bill will be monitored.

The Committee's Stage 1 report on the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill recommended "there is transparency regarding the £20m additional funding for Additional Learning Needs." I trust this letter will provide that transparency.

My officials have been working work closely with stakeholders to develop the approach to supporting the implementation of the new additional learning needs

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

framework. A public consultation about how the Bill should be implemented, subject to its passage through the National Assembly, closed in June. We have been reflecting on the feedback received about the priorities for implementation and transition support and have refined our budget forecasting accordingly. I published a statement on 11th December outlining our proposed approach, and indicated that following analysis of the consultation responses, we have restructured our £20m funding commitments to better align them with the needs of the sector.

This letter sets out the changes to the indicative budget allocations across the various strands of the transformation programme since March. It also provides further information in response to questions raised by the Committee about which activities in the programme are funded through our additional investment of £100m to raise school standards; which costs are directly related to the Bill and which costs have been included in the revised regulatory impact assessment as transition costs that fall directly to the Welsh Government.

I have also made it clear where information provided below links to other relevant recommendations in the Finance Committee's Stage 1 report, therefore expanding on then Minister formal response to the Committee's report in his letter of 17 July.

Changes to the ALN transformation budget profile

In summary, I expect the indicative transformation programme work strands to be profiled over the next four financial years as follows:

Table 1: Breakdown of ALN transformation programme work strands

Workstream	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Implementation/ transition support	1,873,000	3,457,000	3,453,500	3,305,000	12,088,500
Workforce development	843,000	2,081,000	2,081,000	2,292,000	7,297,000
Awareness- raising	237,500	142,500	167,500	105,000	652,500
Supporting policy	82,500	55,500	34,000	34,000	206,000
Total	3,036,000	5,736,000	5,736,000	5,736,000	20,244,000

Overall, the total indicative budget for the transformation programme remains £20.244m between 2017-18 and 2020-21, and the annual totals remains the same. However, the profiling of the budget between the various strands of the programme has changed.

The changes reflect the development in our thinking about the role of the ALN Transformation Leads, who will be appointed this autumn. The former Minister wrote to you on 11 July to inform you of the written statement published that day about the

Transformation Leads, explaining that these roles would be responsible for managing the implementation grants for local authorities and further education institutions, pooled to maximise the impact of investment.

We have reallocated a significant element of the budget from the workforce strand of the transformation programme to the implementation and transition support strand, in order to increase the grant funding for the ALN Transformation Leads, to be used for coordinating the delivery of regional, multi-agency training and professional development on the new legislative framework and its implications for all those involved in supporting learners with ALN.. This reflects the feedback to the consultation which identified funding for training for all staff involved with ALN as a priority for implementation, as well as specific training for those with new roles and responsibilities (such as additional learning needs coordinators (ALNCos), designated education clinical lead officers (DECLOs) in health boards and local authority early years ALN lead officers).

The increased investment in the grants for the Transformation Leads also reflects calls from respondents to the consultation for strong strategic leadership, both at a national level from Welsh Government, and in providing direct support and advice to local authorities, FEIs, schools, early years settings and health boards. There were also calls for detailed implementation plans to be put in place and communicated to all delivery partners, and effective monitoring arrangements to be put in place to ensure that the roll-out of the new system remained on track.

Funding for the regional posts will be provided to a lead local authority on behalf of the other authorities in the region (on a regional education consortia footprint). The lead authorities will employ the Regional Transformation Leads directly. Colegau Cymru will employ and receive the grant for the FE Transformation Lead post.

In 2017-18, each of the four lead authorities will be provided with an equal grant allocation of £67,500. From 2018-19 to 2020-21, each lead authority will be provided with £0.125m to cover the costs of the Transformation Leads (including salary and other associated on-costs) and to provide administration and finance support to the Transformation Lead. The remaining budget (£2.7m) will be allocated on a formula basis, with a 70% weighting for pupil numbers (aged 5-15) and 30% weighting for school numbers.

While the funding for the rollout of training will be coordinated by the Regional Transformation Leads under the implementation and transition support strand of the programme, the materials to be used to deliver training will be developed by the Welsh Government under the awareness-raising strand of the budget. This is in line with a key recommendation of the ALN training expert group – that training must be based on a consistent, national set of messages about the new system that should be developed centrally. The training package will include modules targeting key practitioners with specific roles in the new system, including It will also target leaders with corporate or statutory responsibilities under the Bill, highlighting key messages focusing on their legal responsibilities, readiness and strategic planning to prepare for implementation.

The awareness-raising budget has therefore been increased to accommodate the significant amount of materials which need to be developed for the implementation of the training programme. This includes the procurement of e-learning packages; face-to-face training materials; videos and animations; and a train-the-trainer course to support the roll-out of a comprehensive training programme. The awareness-raising strand of the programme will also include the creation of resources to raise awareness of the new system targeting children, young people, families and the public.

£100m for improving school standards

£10.1m of the transformation programme budget is being drawn from our additional investment of £100m to raise school standards. This comprises £9.85m to fund the Regional ALN Transformation Leads and provide them with a budget for implementation training and £0.25m to develop training materials and for surveys of the SENCo and specialist workforce to inform the approach to the roll-out of training and development for those key professions.

The costs of the rest of the programme are based on the planning assumption that the Government's ALN budget line is maintained at its current level until 2020-21 (£2.786m in 2017-18). This is subject to consideration and agreement in future year budget allocations.

Bill-related costs and the revised RIA

In line with the Finance Committee's recommendation in its Stage 1 report – "the Regulatory Impact Assessment is updated to incorporate the relevant revisions to figures" – the RIA has been revised over the summer and the Committee was provided with an updated version on 8 September. A further version was laid before the Assembly as part of the revised Explanatory Memorandum on 14 November.

The Committee also recommended "any revised Regulatory Impact Assessment makes clear whether additional funding is being made available for the purposes of the Bill." The revised RIA includes a number of costs, which will be directly incurred by the Welsh Government in relation to the implementation of the Bill:

- £0.61m of these costs will be funded through the transformation programme – the ALN Strategic Implementation Group and expert groups (£0.01m); compliance and impact monitoring (£0.21m); and the development of awareness raising training and resources (£0.39m);
- The other Welsh Government transition costs listed in the RIA relate to staff costs or come from other budgets such as the annual funding for Careers Wales and are not part of the £20m ALN transformation programme funding.

For the purposes of the RIA, grants that the Welsh Government will be issuing have not been included because these costs do not directly fall on the Welsh Government as a result of the Bill, but on delivery partners. The Welsh Government has committed to provide grant funding to support organisations in making the transition

to the new legislative system and these will come from the £20m ALN transformation programme funding.

The indicative grant funding includes £10.4235m between 2017-18 and 2020-21. The grants for the Regional and FE Transformation Leads during that period will total £9.87m and £0.35m respectively (plus a one-off cost for the recruitment process for all five posts of £0.038m in 2017-18). It also includes grant funding to cover the costs of implementing the new legislative system, as identified in the RIA, that will fall to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales (£0.103m between 2018-19 and 2019-20) and Estyn (£0.0625m in 2019-20).

The terms and conditions attached to the grant funding will ensure they are used for specific purposes to support implementation of the new legislative system, in line with the Committee's recommendation that "the Additional Learning Needs implementation grant funding provided to local authorities and other organisations should be ring-fenced to ensure that its use specifically relates to implementing obligations from the Bill".

In total, these Bill-related activities are expected to amount to £11.0335m between 2017-18 and 2020-21 (see table 2, annex 1). The remainder of the activities in the transformation programme contribute to the same aims as the Bill – to ensure all learners with ALN are supported to overcome barriers to learning and can achieve their full potential, however these are not directly related to implementing the new legislative framework.

These wider transformational activities include, for example, the ALN innovation projects which are developing innovative, multi-agency solutions to improve services for learners with ALN; local authority specialist services skills development (for example, educational psychologists, specialist advisory teachers for learners with hearing impairment, visual impairment or multi-sensory impairment) and the Learning with Autism programme for the work-based learning sector. Details about all the activities in the programme were provided to you in March.

Arrangements for monitoring implementation

The approach to monitoring the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill will consider whether stakeholders are ready for implementation, are compliant with the provisions set out in the Bill and whether the Bill has achieved the expected outcomes and impacts. This will be undertaken prior to implementation, during implementation and post implementation.

Prior to implementation, the main focus of the work will be to assess the readiness of delivery partners to implement the new system. We have begun by commissioning a baseline evaluation, currently being undertaken by Arad Research and the University of South Wales. Early in the new year, the Transformation Leads will begin working with the authorities in their region, or FEIs in the case of the FE Transformation Lead, to undertake readiness assessments. This will be supported by a thematic review of the readiness of schools to implement the new ALN system. The Transformation Leads will use the evidence from these sources to develop implementation plans.

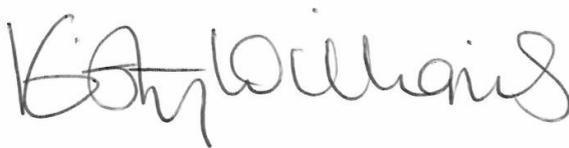
During implementation, progress against implementation plans will be reported to the Welsh Government and monitored at a national level through the ALN Strategic Implementation Group. The ALN-SIG and the new Transformation Leads will also help support local authorities to manage the transition of the agreed cohorts of eligible learners onto Individual Development Plans within set timescales. This will also be reported to Ministers on a regular basis.

A post-implementation review will consider the extent to which the Bill has achieved the expected impacts. This will use the Arad evaluation as a baseline against which the new system can be compared, supported by evidence from Estyn, statistical data, and research with stakeholders, including parents. This will be reported to the National Assembly in due course.

I hope this information is helpful and provides the Committee with reassurance around the direction of travel as regards our investment in real transformation of the way in which support for children and young people with ALN is planned and delivered.

I am copying this letter to Lynne Neagle AM, chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams'.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Table 2: Directly Bill-related costs

	Activity	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total	Total
Included in revised RIA as WG transition costs	ALN-SIG & Expert Groups	5,000	5,000			10,000	610,000
	Readiness, compliance and impact monitoring	80,000	130,000			210,000	
	Development of core skills/ awareness-raising materials	100,000	50,000	135,000	105,000	390,000	
Not included in revised RIA – grants to support partners in relation to costs which befall them via the Bill	SENTW transition support		17,000	86,000		103,000	10,423,500
	Estyn transition support			62,500		62,500	
	Regional ALN Transformation Leads	270,000	3,200,000	3,200,000	3,200,000	9,870,000	
	FE Transformation Lead	35,000	105,000	105,000	105,000	350,000	
	Recruitment of Transformation Leads	38,000				38,000	
	Total	528,000	3,507,000	3,588,500	3,410,000	11,033,500	