

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2026

REFERENCE FROM START WELL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH, 2026

**“759 TASK AND FINISH REVIEW – ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS RESOURCE BASES (DCR) –**

The report, presented by the Group’s Chair, Councillor H. Payne, requested the Start Well Scrutiny Committee to consider the findings and recommendations of the investigatory group work (Task and Finish Review) reviewing the provision of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Resource Bases.

The Task and Finish Group (the Group) examined staffing, funding, quality, access, and value for money across the Vale of Glamorgan’s 10 ALN Resource Bases, plus outreach and sensory services. Members also conducted multiple site visits and met with gathered parents, pupils and officers. The overall impression was high quality, nurturing provision, but with systemic pressure points and calculated risks, particularly around funding and staffing.

The membership of the Scrutiny Committee's Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases Task and Finish Group was 6, consisting of Councillors H. Payne (Chair), W. Hennessy (Vice-Chair), A. Asbrey, J. Aviet, W. Gilligan and S. Hanks.

The Group’s terms of references was agreed at its first meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2025, a copy of which was attached at Appendix A to the report.

The Group’s overall conclusion was that the ALN provision across the Vale of Glamorgan provided high quality, child centred accessible education tailored to the needs of the learner, but some significant strategic risks were identified:

- Grant reliance;
- Cost for therapy;
- SEMH demands;
- Staffing pressures and recruitment difficulties.

Recognised strengths included:

- Highly committed and skilled staff;
- Good practice evident across all bases;
- Effective outreach services;
- Strong pupil engagement and wellbeing;
- Evidence of thoughtful, inclusive learning environments;
- Creative use of building space.

The Group expressed strong appreciation for staff commitment and emphasised the need for sustainable long-term funding and system improvements.

Having considered the report, it was

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** the report be referred to Cabinet for its consideration and approval of the Task and Finish Group’s recommendations provided in paragraph 2.43.

Reason for recommendation

To allow Cabinet to consider the findings, observations and recommendations of the Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases Task and Finish Group.”

Attached as Appendix – Report to Start Well Scrutiny Committee: 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2026

Meeting of:	<b>Start Well Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 23 March 2026</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Start Well Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Task and Finish Review – Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases
Purpose of Report:	To consider the findings of the Task and Finish Review into Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases.
Report Owner:	Director of Corporate Resources
Responsible Officer:	Gareth Davies, Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Director of Learning and Skills Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources Legal Clearance Finance Section
Policy Framework:	This report is in accordance with the recommendations of the Audit Wales (formerly Wales Audit Office) Democratic Renewal report and follows a review of the Council's scrutiny function.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report requests the Start Well Scrutiny Committee to consider the findings and recommendations of the investigatory group work (Task and Finish Review) reviewing the provision of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Resource Bases.</li> <li>• The Task and Finish Group (The Group) examined staffing, funding, quality, access, and value for money across the Vale of Glamorgan's 10 ALN Resource Bases, plus outreach and sensory services. Members also conducted multiple site visits and met with gathered parents, pupils and officers. The overall impression was high quality, nurturing provision, but with systemic pressure points and calculated risks, particularly around funding and staffing.</li> <li>• The membership of the Scrutiny Committee's Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases Task and Finish Group is 6, consisting of Councillors H. Payne (Chair), W. Hennessy (Vice Chair), A. Asbrey, J. Aviet, W. Gilligan and S. Hanks.</li> </ul>	

- The Groups terms of references was agreed at its first meeting held on 4th September, 2025. A copy is attached at Appendix A.
- The Groups overall conclusion was that the ALN provision across the Vale of Glamorgan provides high quality, child centred accessible education tailored to the needs of the learner, but some significant strategic risks were identified:
  - Grant reliance
  - Cost for therapy
  - SEMH demands
  - Staffing pressures and recruitment difficulties
- Recognised strengths included:
  - Highly committed and skilled staff
  - Good practice evident across all bases
  - Effective outreach services
  - Strong pupil engagement and wellbeing
  - Evidence of thoughtful, inclusive learning environments
  - Creative use of building space
- The Group expressed strong appreciation for staff commitment and emphasised the need for sustainable long-term funding and system improvements.

## **Recommendation**

1. That the Start Well Scrutiny Committee refers the report on to Cabinet for its consideration and approval of the Task and Finish Groups recommendations provided in paragraph 2.43.

## **Reason for Recommendation**

1. To allow the Start Well Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet to consider the findings, observations and recommendations of the Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases Task and Finish Group.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 On 10th April 2025, Cabinet agreed proposals for new Scrutiny arrangements to take affect for the 2025/26 municipal year and which were aligned to the new objectives contained within the Council's new Corporate Plan – Vale 2030. A copy of the Cabinet report can be found in the following link:  
[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf)
- 1.2 The new arrangements were subsequently agreed by Council at its meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025.
- 1.3 During its meeting in May 2025, members of the Scrutiny Committee were asked to put forward suggestions for deep dive investigations of a Task and Finish Review Group. Suggestions were collated and considered by the Scrutiny Committee during its meeting held in July 2025.
- 1.4 It was subsequently agreed for a review into the provision of Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases be undertaken.
- 1.5 The findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Review Group are provided in this report.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1 The membership of the Scrutiny Committee's Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases Task and Finish Group is 6, consisting of Councillors H. Payne (Chair), W. Hennessy (Vice Chair), A. Asbrey, J. Aviet, W. Gilligan and S. Hanks.
- 2.2 The Groups terms of references was agreed at its first meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2025. A copy is attached at Appendix A.

### **2.3 Findings of the Task and Finish Group**

**2.4** There are currently 9 Local Authority Resource Bases across the Vale of Glamorgan and 2 Local Authority Satellite Resource Bases accommodating 82 learners in Primary settings and 71 learners at Secondary settings.

**2.5** For the Primary School sector, Centres of Excellence/Resource Bases are as follows:

- Complex Needs - Jenner Park Primary
- Speech, Language, Communication Needs - Ysgol Y Ddraig
- Hearing Support - Cogan Primary
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) and Anxiety - Holton Primary (brand new provision)
- Physical and Medical Needs (PMED) - Palmerston Primary
- ASC/Anxiety Welsh Medium - Ysgol Gwaun Y Nant.

**2.6** Secondary School sector bases include:

- Hearing Support – St Cyres
- Physical and Medical Needs – St Cyres
- ASC base at Whitmore High
- ASC satellite Welsh Medium base at Bro Morgannwg
- ASC satellite base – Pencoedtre High School.

**2.7** Information on the bases are provided on the Council's website - <https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/schools/Additional-Learning-Needs/Specialist-Provisions.aspx>.

**2.8** Llantwit Major and Stanwell secondary schools have both received funding to create bases, while Cowbridge Comprehensive and St Cyres High School will receive funding from April 2026 to develop bases. All secondary schools will then have their own satellite bases which are managed internally by each school. Learners in the Local Authority (LA) bases are placed through an LA panel process that has then determined that they need full time Specialist Additional Learning Provision (ALPs).

**2.9** The satellite bases at schools are provisions that the schools' own learners attend, whereby the school has decided the pupils who would benefit from targeted provision.

**2.10** This is agreed by the school through their own system. What this may mean/ lead to is schools improving their own provision offer to be able to meet the needs of their own learners by having this resource, thereby reducing escalation of need and then preventing the learner needing specialist support in a resource base.

**2.11** Specific ALN outreach services are:

- Cognition and Learning Outreach
- Specific Learning Difficulties Outreach

- Speech, Language and Communication Needs Outreach
- Hearing Support Outreach
- Visual Impairment Outreach and Habilitation
- Physical and Medical Outreach.

**2.12 Group Site Visits** – The Group undertook several visits to Resource Bases across the Vale of Glamorgan over a 4-month period and was able to be shown facilities and learning environments, meet and talk to Senior Leaders and staff and most importantly to see how the Resource Bases staff interacted with pupils and met their ALN needs. A summary of the visits and observations is set out below.

**2.13** Resource Bases within the primary school sector visited:

- **Jenner Park Complex Needs Resource Base** - overall impression of an inclusive, well-resourced environment. Excellent use of an old Victorian building, transformed into a high-quality resource base with strong learning environments. Staffing and leadership praised. The Group highlighted a recommendation for continued investment in to physical and digital resources.
- **Speech, Language, Communication Needs - Ysgol Y Ddraig** - feedback included: Children attend 3 days at the base and 2 at their mainstream school, there was strong, confidence-building environment. Referrals are primarily through NHS but decreasing NHS therapy availability not. The Group was impressed by pupils' engagement and communication.
- **Ysgol Gwaun Y Nant ASC/Anxiety Welsh Medium** – observations of a highly resourced, spacious, and well-maintained facility. Current utilisation is 50%, with 3 pupils on Mondays/Tuesdays and 5 pupils on Thursdays/Fridays (capacity for 16 different pupils). There was ongoing work to determine whether the base's designation should evolve to address a broader range of needs (e.g., complex needs rather than solely ASC/Anxiety).

**2.14** Overall observations from visits across primary bases were that Members consistently found:

- Warm, nurturing staff and highly supportive environments.
- Good use of sensory rooms, outdoor learning, communication aids and structured routines.
- Children were engaged and happy; strong relationships were evident.

**2.15** Operational aspects identified:

- Location constraints - Some bases not in ideal central areas but determined by available space.
- Hearing Support has heavy workload - 3 teachers support 200 pupils, including mandatory newborn visits.
- Cognition and Learning Outreach teacher has 300 pupils on caseload.

- Places not utilised cannot be re-allocated or reused if a pupil refuses to attend, due to IDP legal naming of a specific school.
- There is no base for Visually Impaired pupils as children receive comprehensive support for 'access to education' needs. Most pupils with a visual impairment are in mainstream schools as that would be their only need.
- A small number of pupils require specialist provision and the Visual Impairment service work with them in that provision.

**2.16** The Group noted:

- Variation in building quality - some older sites were less suitable than new build settings, though staff compensate creatively.
- Line management inconsistency - some staff managed by headteachers, others by central ALN team.

**2.17** Resource bases within the secondary school sector visited were:

- **Hearing Base/Physical Support - St Cyres School** - Facilities significantly improved from previous unsuitable rooms. Sensory spaces, rest areas and medical accommodation highly praised. Members very moved by pupils' resilience and daily challenges. Positive observations of early intervention for hearing/visual impairments-contact made with families within days of diagnosis. Learner voice was positively encouraged.
- **Whitmore High School ALN Resource Base** - The Group reported a positive and impressive visit, praising staff knowledge and commitment. Warm, compassionate staff and calm learning environment. Opportunities for pupils to enter school through a separate entrance if needed. Allotment and horticulture activities praised for wellbeing benefits. Use of vegetables grown on site for school meals noted as excellent practice. There were 48 pupils with LA IDPs with, 34 in the ASC base. Outdoor learning spaces were well utilised including wooden classrooms, polytunnels, gardens, and sensory areas. Pupils benefited from cooking sessions and sensory rooms for regulation.

**2.18** Key findings identified within the secondary school sector included:

- High physical demands in PMED bases; some pupils require 2 adults due to medical needs.
- Large staffing ratios e.g., Whitmore ASC: 1 teacher + 28 LSAs, because teacher role is oversight, not teaching.
- Timetable complexities - Secondary scheduling makes specialist support difficult to coordinate.
- Gap in Welsh medium secondary provision – to be resolved via new funding to establish a Welsh medium ALN base at Ysgol Bro Morgannwg (20 places).

**2.19 Key Systemic Gaps Identified** – the Group has identified some gaps to be considered further -

1. Health vs Education funding responsibilities - Schools increasingly pay for therapies and medical support. Schools think that this should fall to the NHS.
2. Grant dependency - Core staffing reliant on short term grants; poses service continuity risk.
3. Inconsistent staffing ratios and concerns about fairness- given that in some resource bases the staffing is higher than for those pupils with the most complex needs, who are at Ysgol y Deri.
4. Transport entitlement issues included; high costs, entitlement inconsistencies, and duplication where families receive mobility benefits
5. Parental support concerns around; Toilet training, home routines.
6. Parental understanding of ALN processes. It was noted that more targeted support is needed.

- 2.20 Meeting (25<sup>th</sup> February, 2026) with gathered parents, young people and officers to explore experiences of ALN provision** – the meeting enabled the Group, parents, young people and officers to discuss their experiences of ALN provision across mainstream schools, ALN bases and specialist settings. Overall, parents praised the quality of support offered in ALN bases, describing staff as highly attentive, knowledgeable and effective in meeting emotional, physical and learning needs. Many reported significant improvements in their children's confidence, independence and ability to engage with school life.
- 2.21** A major theme highlighted during the meeting was parent isolation. That was because pupils are usually transported and parents rarely meet at the school gate, so many do not know other parents and feel they have no informal network to turn to when issues arise. Several felt "on their own", especially when navigating social or online problems. A parent forum was repeatedly suggested as a way to enable connection, problem solving and support.
- 2.22** Online safety was a recurring concern. Parents described escalating issues on social media platforms outside school, with limited school intervention because incidents occur off site. Young people noted that e-safety lessons do not cover practical platforms like WhatsApp or Snapchat. Parents felt vulnerable and unsure how to manage these situations without peer support.
- 2.23** One parent expressed ongoing worry over stranger awareness, stating that repeated requests for support had not led to consistent teaching in school. There were also discussions around physical safety-particularly for learners with mobility challenges-and how phones can act as essential safety tools.
- 2.24** Experiences of the referral process varied: some families reported smooth transitions, while others described long battles for assessment or placement changes. Gaps in early outreach were highlighted as missed opportunities for earlier support.

- 2.25** A parent raised concerns about limited Welsh medium ALN provision, worrying about the impact on their child's language and cultural identity. Officers acknowledged recruitment challenges across Wales.
- 2.26** Social opportunities outside school were limited. While some learners attended youth clubs or community activities, others lacked accessible safe spaces. Parents described balancing the desire for independence with anxiety about vulnerability.
- 2.27** The meeting concluded with recognition that ALN bases provide strong support and positive outcomes, but improvements were needed in:
- Parent to parent communication
  - Online safety guidance
  - Stranger awareness and independence skills
  - Clearer outreach and referral pathways
  - Welsh medium ALN staffing and opportunities.
- 2.28 Funding, Staffing & Cost Pressures** – the Group highlights that the ALN service relied heavily on grant funding as there was a significant proportion of ALN staffing funded through Welsh Government grants.
- 2.29** The Group has identified severe risks in terms of service delivery if Welsh Government does not renew funding, particularly in relation to the Council's exit strategies if funding was removed.
- 2.30** Cost per place varies widely, examples being:
- Complex Needs (Jenner Park): £13,500 per place
  - Speech and Language Base: £8,627 (base) / £913 (outreach)
  - PMED Bases: ~£22,000 per place
  - ASC Anxiety Bases: £18,000 (effectively £9k per child due to paired model)
  - Hearing Support: ~£22,000 per pupil (equipment extremely expensive)
  - Visual Impairment Outreach: £1,777 per pupil.
- 2.31 Tribunals** – it was identified that ALN tribunal decisions increasingly shift health related costs and requirements within pupil Individual Development Plans (e.g., therapies) onto education budgets. This was creating significant cost pressures for the Council. Also, tribunal decisions recommend the use of private education to meet the needs of the learner when the ALN bases essentially can meet those needs.
- 2.32 Staff retention** presented challenges particularly as many roles within Resource Bases were physically demanding or of a specialist nature, although there is a high staff retention rate across the bases as staff form a dedicated workforce.
- 2.33 Outreach & Engagement Services.** The Group identified that Outreach referrals have increased from 114 (2019/20) to 261 (2024/25). In addition, referrals to the Council's Engagement Service (under the umbrella of Ysgol Y

Deri) rose from 85 to 263 in a similar timeframe. Overall, around 870 pupils were known to the Engagement Service.

**2.34 Over subscription-** a snapshot in October 2025 was:

ASC Holton Road Primary School: 1 pupil .

Speech, Language and Communication Need (SLCN): 0 pupils.

Hearing: ) 0 pupils

Jenner Park: 0 pupils

Gwaun y Nant (Welsh medium ASC): 0 pupils

Derw Newydd (Primary Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) at Ysgol Y Deri): 10 pupils

The issue of the Welsh medium base being under prescribed was identified with other bases being oversubscribed, an arrangement to utilise the spaces may be an option.

**2.35** Concerns highlighted were that SEMH demands were very high and data access issues in some schools, although it was noted that improvements had been identified and implementation underway.

**2.36 Performance Indicators, Quality & Outcomes** - Members emphasised the need for more qualitative evidence relating to pupil wellbeing, engagement and happiness and case studies tracking "learner journeys". This would be a useful for the public to understand some of the challenges associated with ALN provision.

**2.37** Academic and communication progress tracking is undertaken via a number of tracking tools such as Seesaw, B Squared, Motional. Producing a consistent framework of indicators was difficult to implement due to the range and complexity of additional learning needs presented by individual pupils. That made tracking outcomes a significant challenge.

**2.38** Evidence of reintegration into mainstream schooling was available where appropriate.

**2.39** Officers stressed the importance of relationship building with parents and pupils as foundation for progress and achieving positive outcomes.

**2.40 Partnership Working for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)** - In the area of partnership working for ASC pupils, it was outlined that the Engagement Service (based at Ysgol Y Deri) supports mainstream pupils with ASC from Nursery to Year 7.

**2.41** The ALN Coordinator in each school is responsible for liaising with the NHS and multi-disciplinary teams.

**2.42** Resource bases sometimes face challenges accessing external services if pupils are considered already within a "specialist" setting; however, effective collaboration is typical and encouraged.

## **2.43 Recommendations**

The ALN Resource Base Task and Finish Group has developed a range of recommendations for the Council (Cabinet and Director of Learning and Skills) to consider:

### **1. Strengthen Funding Stability and Reduce Grant Dependency**

**1.1 Seek a multi-year funding commitment from Welsh Government** for ALN resource bases and associated outreach services, to reduce annual uncertainty and enable sustainable staffing plans.

**1.2 Develop an exit risk strategy** identifying posts vulnerable to grant loss—particularly roles currently funded only until April 2026—and prepare mitigation options.

### **2. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities Between Education and Health**

**2.1 Engage Welsh Government and Health Board** regarding funding responsibilities for therapies and medical interventions currently falling to schools, especially in PMED, SLCN and ASC bases.

**2.2 Clarify roles and establish a joint Education–Health protocol** for expectations around:

- clinical responsibilities
- attendance at IDP meetings
- data sharing
- therapy provision - this aims to reduce ambiguity and prevent therapy costs shifting onto education budgets.

### **3. Improve Consistency Across Resource Bases**

**3.1 Introduce a uniform line management structure** for all resource base staff to reduce variation, improve accountability and ensure equitable support across bases.

**3.2 Review comparative staffing ratios**, including alignment of LSA deployment across bases and ensuring equity with Ysgol Y Deri where appropriate.

**3.3 Develop a consistent, authority wide procurement framework** for specialist equipment to ensure cost efficiency and standardisation across bases.

**3.4 Continued investment** in physical and digital resources.

**3.5 That close collaborative working arrangements** that the Resources Base have be strengthened to ensure that the Bases are aligned to the service needs and they continue to support each other.

## **4. Enhance Data Collection, Monitoring and Performance Measures**

4.1 **Ensure that there are uniform data tracking systems** across bases with similar functions (e.g. BSquared, Seesaw, Motional) so that progress data is standardised and comparable.

4.2 **Develop a Key Performance Indicators framework** for resource bases including:

- progress against IDP targets
- reintegration rates to mainstream
- attendance trends
- wellbeing indicators
- qualitative case study evidence.

## **5. Address Access and Capacity Issues**

5.1 **Create a standardised system for monitoring sufficiency of spaces**, including monthly reporting on - numbers waiting, need type, school of origin and capacity pressures.

5.2 **Prioritise expansion of SEMH capacity**, where demand remains disproportionately high.

5.3 **Ensure timely development of the Welsh medium secondary ALN base** at Bro Morgannwg, ensuring alignment of entry criteria and transition planning with Welsh medium primaries.

## **6. Strengthen Parental Engagement and Support**

6.1 **Introduce a structured parental support programme**, offering guidance on:

- supporting communication
- understanding the ALN process and IDPs

6.2 **Establish or encourage regular parent forums** for each resource base to feed into evaluation and service planning.

6.3 **Include direct parent voice** as a standing element of future scrutiny reviews of ALN provision.

## **7. Improve Transport Consistency and Value for Money**

7.1 **Review ALN transport policy** to ensure consistency of entitlement and alignment with mainstream policy while avoiding duplication (e.g., where families receive mobility benefits).

7.2 **Explore flexible fleet options**, such as the potential use of under-utilised electric vehicles, considering cost, staffing and safeguarding requirements.

## **8. Strengthen Strategic Planning for Future Provision**

8.1 **Develop a long term ALN accommodation strategy**, addressing issues such as

- inequitable building quality
- space deficits
- accessibility requirements
- future demand growth
- mapping of the current ALN need in Primary schools to feed in to Secondary Bases.

8.2 **Ensure all secondary schools progress toward establishing satellite bases**, reducing pressure on need for specialist provisions and strengthening locality-based inclusion.

8.3 **Introduce “learner journey” case studies** as part of annual service reporting to capture developmental progress, wellbeing and transition outcomes.

**2.44 Conclusion** - The Group’s overall conclusion was that the ALN provision across the Vale of Glamorgan provides high quality, child centred accessible education tailored to the needs of the learner, but some significant strategic risks were identified:

- Grant reliance
- Cost for therapy
- SEMH demands
- Staffing pressures and recruitment difficulties.

**2.45** Recognised strengths included:

- Highly committed and skilled staff
- Good practice evident across all bases
- Effective outreach services
- Strong pupil engagement and wellbeing
- Evidence of thoughtful, inclusive learning environments
- Creative use of building space.

**2.46** The Group expressed strong appreciation for staff commitment and emphasised the need for sustainable long-term funding and system improvements.

**2.47 Next Steps** – the Scrutiny Committee are being asked to consider the findings of the Task and Finish Group and refer the recommendations on to Cabinet for approval.

**2.48** If approved the recommendations will form the basis of an action plan for future monitoring.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** Task and Finish review activities undertaken by the Scrutiny Committees will form a key part of them meeting their Terms of References which are aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan – Vale 2030, which in turn, is aligned to the Wellbeing Goals for Wales.

### **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 4.1** None as a direct result of this report.

### **5. Resources and Legal Considerations**

#### **Financial**

- 5.1** None as a direct result of this report, although any recommendations implemented may require financial assessment by the Directorate.

#### **Employment**

- 5.2** None as a direct result of this report.

#### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 5.3** None as a direct result of this report.

### **6. Background Papers**

Cabinet report with new Scrutiny proposal – 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-04-10/Reshaping-Scrutiny.pdf)

Scrutiny report – 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny-New-2025/Scrutiny-Start-Well/2025/25-07-07/Task-and-Finish-Review-Topics.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny-New-2025/Scrutiny-Start-Well/2025/25-07-07/Task-and-Finish-Review-Topics.pdf)

## Task & Finish Working Group Project Brief

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s):	Start Well Scrutiny Committee
Originating Scrutiny Committee Meeting(s):	<i>19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025</i>
Supporting Democratic Services Officer(s):	Gareth Davies
Task & Finish Project Name:	Review the Additional Learning Needs Resource Bases
Working Group Chairman:	To be determined.
Working Group Members:	Councillors A. Asbrey, J. Aviet, W. Gilligan, S.Hanks, W. Hennessy and H. Payne.
External Witnesses and Council Officers:	Liz Jones, Director of Learning & Skills Trevor Baker, Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources Katy Williams, Head of Additional Learning Needs and Wellbeing
Project Aim(s):	To assess that effective use is made of the public finances, that resources bases comply with the statutory duties of the ALN Act and meets the needs of the most vulnerable learners in their communities where possible. ALN is recognised as a corporate risk, and therefore, it is critical that this area receives the attention of scrutiny.

Project Objective(s):	To assess the use of ALN Resource Bases to ensure that they provide value for money and are meeting the requirements of the ALN Act.
Project Timescales:	<p>TBC; but could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial meeting to elect Chair and Vice Chair and to consider the scope, practices and options of the Task and Finish Group.</li> <li>• Background to ALN act and provision as well as the Council's Policy and Strategy.</li> <li>• The subsequent briefings, expert testimonies and likely site visits.</li> <li>• Consideration of Proposals and Recommendations.</li> <li>• Final report to be determined by the Scrutiny Committee, ideally, by no later than January 2026.</li> <li>• Reference to Cabinet for consideration of recommendations.</li> </ul>
Resources and Budget:	VOGC Officers and Elected Members' time.
Working Methods:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings.</li> <li>• Visits.</li> <li>• Interviews.</li> <li>• Research analysis.</li> <li>• Discussions with External Witnesses and Council Officers.</li> <li>• Develop an action plan / formulate recommendation.</li> </ul>

Evidence Formats:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing reports.</li> <li>• Presentations.</li> <li>• Background information – current Policies and legislation both current and future.</li> <li>• Site visits.</li> <li>• Consultation.</li> <li>• Interviews with Service Users and/or Expert / External Witnesses.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Relevant Research Information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current ALN provision throughout the VOGC area.</li> <li>• ALN Act</li> <li>• Council ALN policies.</li> <li>• ALN budget.</li> <li>• Any information highlighting best practice.</li> </ul>
Desired Outcomes:	<p>Learners with Additional Learning Needs have the support they need locally and in their language of choice.</p> <p>Any gaps in provision are highlighted and recommendations formulated and considered by Cabinet / Director of Learning and Skills.</p>
Relevant Corporate Plan Well-being Objective(s):	Well-being Objective 3 - Giving everyone a good start in life
Relevant Corporate Plan Well-being Action(s):	8 - Improve the availability, consistency and quality of local provision for learners with complex Additional Learning Needs and for Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

Corporate Reporting Outcomes:	That the subsequent report and the recommendations, comments and suggestions produced by the Task and Finish Group be submitted for consideration to Scrutiny Committee and, if appropriate, be forwarded to Cabinet for their review and endorsement.
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