

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

9 DECEMBER 2014

Title:	Adult Autism Strategy 2015 – 2017		
Report of the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services			
Open Report	For Decision		
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: Yes		
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Sponsor: Anne Bristow, Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services			
Summary: <p>Over the last six months, the Council has been working with partners to refresh its Adult Autism Strategy which has been in existence since 2011. The Strategy has been updated to reflect the new Think Autism national update, as well as the changes that have been brought in through the Winterbourne View Concordat, the Care Act and the Children and Families Act.</p> <p>The Council commissioned the Sycamore Trust, a local charity that supports individuals and families affected by autistic spectrum disorders, to consult and engage with individuals, their carers and professionals on the Strategy and to help shape the Strategy's action plan. Consultation responses from service users and carers can be found at the following link on the Care and Support Hub: http://careandsupport.lbbd.gov.uk/kb5/barkingdagenham/asch/advice.page?id=7D-QEpNy3Fs</p> <p>The refreshed Adult Autism Strategy 2015 - 2017 is before the Health and Wellbeing Board for agreement. The final Strategy will be published on the Council's Care and Support Hub at the above link. Following agreement the Strategy will be regularly monitored by the Learning Disability Partnership Board.</p>			
Recommendation(s)			
The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss and agree the Adult Autism Strategy 2015 - 2017 attached at Appendix 1 and delegate responsibility to the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services to make any final amendments to the Strategy before publication.• Agree to delegate responsibility to the Learning Disability Partnership Board (LDPB) to monitor the progress of the Strategy and to receive a progress report on its implementation from the LDPB in one year.			

- Agree to delegate responsibility to the LDPB to make amendments to the Autism Strategy following the final publication of the Think Autism guidance in 2015. If amendments are substantial it is proposed that the LDPB will bring amendments to the Health and Wellbeing Board for agreement, subject to discussion and agreement between the chairs of the LDPB and the Health & Wellbeing Board.
- Agree to delegate responsibility to the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services to finalise the bid for the Autism Innovation Capital Grant before its submission on 12 December 2014.

Reason(s)

The Adult Autism Strategy assists the Council in achieving its vision and priorities, particularly in relation to the priority of “enabling social responsibility”. This priority is made up of a number of elements, including:

- Supporting residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community
- Protecting the most vulnerable, keeping adults and children healthy and safe
- Ensuring everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it.

Additionally, this Strategy also ties in with the Council’s priority of ‘encouraging civic pride’, particularly in promoting a welcoming, safe, and resilient community, and also the priority of ‘growing the borough’ which includes developing a local, skilled workforce, improving employment opportunities and supporting housing needs.

1 Introduction

1.1 The first ever strategy for adults with autism in England, ‘Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives’, was published in 2010 with a commitment to review this strategy three years on.¹ The strategy resulted from the Autism Act, which set out governmental commitment to inclusion and full participation by adults with autism in society. Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives set out a framework for all mainstream services across the public sector to work together for adults with autism. For local health and social care economies, Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives focused on four key areas where support for adults with autism should be strengthened:

- Increasing understanding of autism amongst staff
- Strengthening diagnosis and assessment of needs
- Continuing to improve transition support for young people with autism
- Ensuring adults with autism are included within local service planning.

1.2 An update to the national strategy was published in April 2014, called ‘Think Autism’.² Alongside the existing recommendations and duties from the 2010 strategy, Think Autism gives further focus to three key areas:

¹ Department of Health 2010, ‘Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England’ - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fulfilling-and-rewarding-lives-the-strategy-for-adults-with-autism-in-england>

² Department of Health 2014, ‘Think Autism’ - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-autism-an-update-to-the-government-adult-autism-strategy>

- Building communities that are more aware of and accessible to the needs of people with autism.
 - Promoting innovative local ideas, services and projects which can help people in their communities.
 - A focus on gathering comprehensive data on local numbers and needs to inform planning and joining up advice and information on available services.
- 1.3 As a requirement of the Autism Act 2009 and Think Autism, the Council, alongside its partners, is required to produce a local plan which sets out the Borough's approach to delivering the national strategy and commissioning local services.
- 1.4 Our first local strategy was published in 2011. The Council and its partners made progress against the 2011 strategy, including the implementation of a clear diagnostic pathway as well as increased awareness amongst frontline professionals with the introduction of a comprehensive autism e-learning package.
- 1.5 There have also been two self-assessment exercises undertaken by the local authority and its partners. A baseline assessment was carried out in 2011, with a follow up assessment completed in 2013. To inform our 2013 assessment and to map our progress against our 2011 local strategy, the Council commissioned a mapping exercise by Kaleidoscope Social Enterprise to outline the position in relation to autism in Barking and Dagenham. The results of the self assessment and the mapping project were reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2013 and can be found by accessing:
<http://moderngov.lbbd.gov.uk/documents/s75080/Autism%20Self%20Assessment%20Framework%20and%20Autism%20Mapping%20Project.pdf>
- 1.6 The mapping project found only a very small number of specialist services focused on autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and that these were almost exclusively focused on people who have ASD together with severe or complex learning disabilities. Feedback from people with ASD revealed concerns about gaining support for transition into adulthood, the need for support to gain employment, and the need for support for adults who have ASD and a learning disability or mental illness.
- 1.7 As a result of the mapping project and the 2014 Think Autism update it was felt that it was timely to refresh the Borough's Adult Autism Strategy. The Council commissioned the Sycamore Trust to consult and engage with adults with autistic spectrum disorders, their carers and professionals on the Strategy and to help shape the action plan within the Strategy. Consultation responses from the residents and carers that they engaged with can be found at the following link:
<http://careandsupport.lbbd.gov.uk/kb5/barkingdagenham/asch/advice.page?id=7D-QEpNy3Fs>

2 The Refreshed Adult Autism Strategy 2015 – 2017

- 2.1 The refreshed Adult Autism Strategy has been written against a backdrop of national and local policy. In particular, the Strategy focuses on the changes brought in nationally through the Children and Families Act and the Care Act, as well as the local Borough response to Winterbourne View. Additionally, the Strategy also refers to the Borough's transformation programme to expand the opportunities available to people with a learning disability and autistic spectrum disorders, called 'Fulfilling Lives'. Where work is already being undertaken by the Council and its partners as

part of the implementation of the Care Act, Children and Families Act, Winterbourne View or Fulfilling Lives, this has been referenced in the Adult Autism Strategy in order to avoid repetition and to ensure that there is clear ownership by the appropriate Officers.

- 2.2 The Strategy has been structured in two parts. The first part sets the context of the Autism Strategy, including the vision and aims, the prevalence of autism in Barking and Dagenham, and the links between the Strategy and the national and local context, including other local Strategies. The second part (from page 12) outlines the actions that will be taken forward from the Strategy between 2015 and 2017. The action plan has been split into nine priority areas (see 2.6 below) and provides an overview of the progress that has been made to date in each of the nine areas.
- 2.3 Once approved, officers will consider with the Learning Disability Partnership Board the appropriate ways to ensure dissemination of the Strategy, including ways in which it can be made more widely accessible.

Vision

- 2.4 The overarching vision for our Adult Autism Strategy is in line with the national autism strategy:

‘Adults with autism living in Barking and Dagenham should be able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within a society that accepts and understands them. They should be able to get a diagnosis; get access to appropriate support if needed; and depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals, helping them make the most of their talents.’

- 2.5 The actions and priorities within this Strategy also tie in with our own Council vision **‘One borough; one community; London’s growth opportunity’**, particularly with the Borough’s key priority of ‘enabling social responsibility’. This Council priority is made up of a number of elements, including:

- Supporting residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community
- Protecting the most vulnerable, keeping adults and children healthy and safe
- Ensuring everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it.

- 2.6 Additionally, this Strategy also ties in with the Council’s priority of ‘encouraging civic pride’, particularly in promoting a welcoming, safe, and resilient community, and also the priority of ‘growing the borough’ which includes developing a local, skilled workforce, improving employment opportunities and supporting housing needs.

Aims

- 2.7 The Adult Autism Strategy has been structured around nine different priorities. These priorities are based on what service users, carers and professionals have told us are priorities for adults with autistic spectrum disorders and for the services that currently exist in the Borough. Each priority area has actions which will be delivered over the life of the Strategy. There are nine aims for the Strategy which reflect each of the priority areas. These are:

1. There is a clear and effective **diagnostic pathway** for autism with information and advice on the support that is available.
2. There is **good quality care and support** for adults with autism.
3. Adults with autism are effectively supported with their **housing needs**.
4. Adults with autism are effectively supported to access **employment, training and skills**.
5. There are lots of opportunities to take part in **meaningful activities**, during the day, in the evenings and at weekends.
6. Young people with autistic spectrum disorders who '**transition**' to adult services are appropriately supported and encounter a smooth transition.
7. Adults with autism are **involved in the design, planning and operation** of services.
8. Adults with autism **feel safe** from harm and abuse at home and in the local community.
9. All health and social care staff, including those commissioned to provide services, are aware of autism and are **appropriately trained** to identify, assess and support those with autism.

Governance

- 2.8 Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives states that local authorities should consider establishing a local autism partnership board 'that brings together different organisations, services and stakeholders locally and sets a clear direction for improved services'. The Department of Health has stated that existing structures may fulfil this purpose and as such the Learning Disability Partnership Board (LDPB) fulfils this function locally as the strategic group for all issues relating to learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorders. Board Members may note that this runs counter to the feedback from a number of people with autism and their carers, who asked for a separate Autism Steering Group; however, combining the role with the LDPB is recommended as a proportionate and manageable way of ensuring that the strategic delivery can be effectively undertaken within the available project management resources. The service user forum of the LDPB does include adults with autistic spectrum disorders.
- 2.9 The Learning Disability Partnership Board (LDPB) will be monitoring the implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy over its lifetime. The LDPB will review progress against the action plan at six monthly intervals.
- 2.10 Board members' attention is also drawn to the timelines attached to the various developments in the Action Plan, which are distributed across the life of the Strategy in order to recognise the resources that are available to deliver against the commitments made. Feedback has suggested that some items should be delivered sooner, but this is presented to the Board as a proportionate and carefully considered view of what can be achieved in delivering the improvements required.

Adherence to the Think Autism update

- 2.11 The Council has ensured that the Think Autism 2014 national update is central to our updated local Strategy. The Think Autism update refers to 15 priority areas for action for autism services in the form of 'I want statements'. These can be found on page 5 of the Strategy. We have ensured that the Strategy covers each of the 15 'I want'

statements at some stage in the Action Plan.

- 2.12 It should be noted that the Think Autism guidance for local authorities and other partners is currently under development and out for national consultation until 19 December 2014.³ We have ensured that this Strategy is compliant with the draft consultation guidance. However, once the final guidance is published, it is proposed that the Learning Disability Partnership Board will ensure that the Adult Autism Strategy is updated to satisfy the requirements from the Department of Health. If amendments are substantial, it is proposed that the LDPB will bring recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board for agreement, and that agreement to do this will rest with the chairs of the LDPB and Health & Wellbeing Board jointly.

3 Autism Innovation Capital Grant

- 3.1 Alongside the release of the draft consultation guidance on Think Autism in November 2014, the Department of Health have also released £18,500 to local authorities to spend on implementing Think Autism. This is a non-recurrent grant for capital works, including the purchase of new electrical equipment or IT developments, or for making environments used by people with autism such as public buildings more autism friendly.
- 3.2 Proposals for the grant are currently being worked up. Consultation is being undertaken with the Sycamore Trust and adults with autism, as well as the Learning Disability Partnership Board in the development of these proposals. Submission of the bid is within a tight timescales, and so it is proposed that the Health and Wellbeing Board delegate responsibility to the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services to finalise the bid for the Autism Innovation Capital Grant before the deadline of 12 December 2014.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 The Sycamore Trust have been engaged in shaping the strategy and, working with Council Officers, there has been engagement with a wide number of service users, carers and professionals in the development of this Adult Autism Strategy. This has included consultation with members of the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

5 Mandatory Implications

5.1 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Autism has a dedicated section in our JSNA that has been refreshed. The strategy is consistent with the strategic recommendations.

5.2 Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The commitments set out in the Health & Wellbeing Strategy are consistent with the priorities identified in the Autism Strategy. The refresh of the Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy in March 2015 will note the key themes of this strategy.

³ The draft guidance for Think Autism that is currently out for consultation can be found by accessing: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371869/Autism_Statutory_Guidance_Consultation_Draft_Guidance.pdf

5.3 Integration

The Adult Autism Strategy has been developed in conjunction with partners and the actions within the Action Plan will be delivered by the organisations identified within the Plan and monitored by the multi-agency Learning Disability Partnership Board.

5.4 Financial Implications

Compiled by Roger Hampson Group Manager Finance (Adults and Community Services)

Other than the Autism Innovation Capital Grant of £18,500 described in section 3, there are no resource implications directly arising from this report. However, further reports will be presented to the Learning Disability Partnership Board on any actions arising from implementing the proposed Strategy, for example if the review of current services for people with high functioning autism (priority 2.2) identifies any gaps in provision for this group; the report if required will need to consider the funding resources available at that time.

The Autism Innovation Grant, if agreed by the Department of Health will be reported to Cabinet in due course for a formal amendment to the local authority's Capital Programme.

5.5 Legal Implications

Compiled by: Dawn Pelle, Adult Care Lawyer

There are no legal implications as all the statutory provisions, guidance and strategies are taken into account in compiling the borough's autism strategy for 2015-2017.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report

December 2013 Health and Wellbeing Board report: 'Autism Self Assessment Framework and Autism Mapping Project'. See:

<http://moderngov.lbbd.gov.uk/documents/s75080/Autism%20Self%20Assessment%20Framework%20and%20Autism%20Mapping%20Project.pdf>

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Adult Autism Strategy 2015 - 2017