

Subject:	Autism Strategy: Self Assessment		
Date of Meeting:	27th November 2013		
Report of:	Executive Director of Adult Services		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 The Department of Health required all areas to report on the progress of local Autism Strategies through a national self-evaluation exercise, the Autism Self-Assessment Framework 2013. The Minister of State for Care & Support, in a letter to Directors of Adult Social Services (2nd August 2013, Appendix 1) required that local Autism Self-Assessments are *"discussed by the local Health and Well Being Board by the end of January 2014 as evidence for local planning and health needs assessment strategy development and supporting local implementation work."*
- 1.2 The Department of Health intend to use the information gathered from all areas to inform a refresh of the Adults Autism Strategy in 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Health & Well-Being Board notes the content of the Brighton & Hove Autism Self-Evaluation report (Appendix 2)
- 2.2 That the Health & Well-Being Board notes the progress made to date through the Autism Strategy and the plans for further development and improvement of local services and outcomes for people with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC).

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The local response to meeting the needs of adults with autism is driven by a range of national and local activities:
 - The recommendations of the Autism Act (2009),
 - 'Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives', the strategy for adults with autism in England (2010), which has accompanying statutory guidance for implementation.
 - Local recommendations through extensive consultation

- The Scrutiny Panel on Services for Adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (March 2011)
 - The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Adults with Autism
- 3.2 Local priorities and actions are defined in the Brighton & Hove Joint Commissioning Strategy for Adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions 2012-2015. The strategy is led by the Adult Social Care Commissioning team.
- 3.3 This local strategy *“sets out the longer-term direction and scope of how health and social care services and their partners can achieve better outcomes for adults with autism, their families and carers”* (p3)
- 3.4 The strategy sets out 25 strategic objectives, each with relevant strategic actions and outcomes. The governance of the strategy sits with the Adult Autism Strategy Stakeholder Group which includes representation for people with autism, carers, community groups and professionals from across the public sector and meets throughout the year to monitor and drive activities to achieve the strategy’s objectives.
- 3.5 The strategy is currently in the early stages of year 2 of its 3 year life:
Year 1 has focussed on improving the diagnostic and care pathway for adults with autism and improving the training and awareness of ASC in the workforce.
Years 2 and 3 will increase focus on the transition for people with autism as they move from being children to adults and local planning and commissioning of services. This will involve actions to improve services across sectors in health, housing, social care, employment, education & leisure.
- 3.6 The agenda for improving the lives of adults with autism is wide-ranging and complex, as it implicates services across the city at every level. Consistent and continuous efforts are needed from a range of partners in order to make comprehensive progress.
- 3.7 In this context significant progress has been made and there is an ongoing commitment to improving local services for adults with autism. The comprehensive strategy and partnership working arrangements will support ongoing and long-term progress.
- 3.8 All local areas were required to complete and submit an Autism Strategy Self-Assessment.
- 3.9 The local Autism Strategy Self-Assessment highlights the following key areas of good performance
- We have a local lead for Autism and a thorough local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which informs our local strategy
 - We are engaged with our local CCG on the Autism Strategy and work jointly with CCG colleagues, as well as colleagues in the Criminal Justice System.
 - We have re-commissioned a comprehensive new programme of training for Adult Social Care staff, including training Autism ‘Champions’ in mainstream services
 - Our Autism Strategy has been developed with wide consultation and we have a Autism Stakeholder group that includes multi-agency representation from

the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors as well as engagement from family carers

- Although our diagnostic services have historically not kept pace with demand, we have commissioned an additional service that is dramatically reducing waiting times for diagnosis and full performance figures will be available by January 2014.
- We do have a range of community and voluntary sector services that support people with ASC and their family carers.
- Autism Sussex have been awarded lottery funding to enrich Autism services within Brighton and Hove, particularly where there are gaps in provision, or in cases where referrals do not meet eligibility criteria for social care. There are now three new projects in Brighton & Hove that are in the initial stages of development
- We have good local Supported Employment services that can be accessed by people with ASC.
- We are working with commissioners in children's services and education to ensure our strategy complements the changes and developments in services for children as they reach adulthood.

3.10 The Autism Self-Evaluation highlights the following key areas where significant improvement is needed to meet Department of Health best practice expectations.

- Although we have some data collection in social care, health and housing services, these are not collated on a single database and therefore our data collection is limited and segmented. Information about older people with ASC is extremely limited. We will aim to improve systems and data collection by 2015 (the end of current Adult Autism Strategy)
- The majority of services fulfil their duties for reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010, without specifically referencing ASC. We have only a few examples of services which have made reasonable adjustments specifically for people with Autism, This includes services provided in the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors. We want more local organisations to make adjustments to enable people with autism to access services. We need to do further work develop a clear council policy and develop key services to make specific reasonable adjustments for people with ASC
- We need to review the range and level of community and voluntary sector services available to people with ASC who need ongoing support but are not eligible for statutory services, and highlight gaps in services to inform commissioning priorities. This will be completed in 2014.
- We need to improve the information available to people with ASC at their point of contact with Adult Social Care services and develop a clearer pathway to assessment and support. This will be completed in 2014.
- We need to improve the uptake of training delivered to key services: assessment, advocacy, primary care. This is being reviewed and will be completed by Spring 2015.

3.10 The Adult Autism Strategy half-way through its 3 year life (April 2012-March 2015). In that context we would expect there to be a number of areas that are not completed, but all of the areas for improvement highlighted in the self-evaluation exercise are addressed through objectives in our local strategy.

- 3.11 Brighton & Hove's self-assessment for improving local services and outcomes for people with ASC is expected to be broadly in line with progress across England, although there will of course be variations between regions. With a comprehensive local strategy and a multi-agency Stakeholder Group overseeing its progress, there are reasons to be confident that further significant progress will be made in the next 18 months and areas needing improvement will be addressed.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Autism Strategy Self-Assessment response was developed in full consultation with the Adult Autism Stakeholder Group.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There is no specific funding attached to the autism strategy, the plans for further development will need to be met through the Adults Services budget and resources identified by partners.

Finance Officer Consulted: Anne Silley Date: 01/11/13

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date: 01/11/13

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed specifically in connection with the completion of the Autism Strategy Self-Assessment, but a full EIA was completed in the development of the Autism Strategy.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The Autism Strategy Self-Assessment itself has no specific Sustainability implications, but progress of the strategy implies more sustainable solutions to meeting the needs of local people with ASC.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The Autism Strategy Self-Assessment itself has no specific Crime & Disorder implications, but specific areas of the strategy address the need to engage with the Criminal Justice System to ensure that training and awareness of ASC creates a an awareness of the specific needs of people with ASC who may come into contact with CJS services. The wider aims of the strategy to meet the needs of people with ASC will reduce the risks to people with ASC being victims of or engaging in risky or criminal behaviour.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The Autism Strategy Self-Assessment itself has no specific Risk Management Plan. The risks, opportunities and barriers to progress are managed through the strategy itself which is managed and monitored through the Adult Autism Stakeholder Group.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The Autism Strategy Self-Assessment itself has no specific Public Health implications, but progress of the strategy implies positive Public Health impacts in terms of better planning for children and young people, greater capacity for self-determination for individuals with complex needs, better access to work and meaningful activity, better health outcomes through enhanced diagnostic services and greater awareness and training for health staff, and more sustainable communities and places through improved training, awareness and reasonable adjustments.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The Autism Strategy Self-Assessment itself has no specific Corporate / Citywide implications, but progress of the strategy is in line with council and citywide priorities (through partnership working) to reduce inequalities, improve value for money, develop capacity in local services, improve health and well-being outcomes and ensure the city meets the needs of the most vulnerable.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Not to complete the Autism Strategy Self-Assessment, however it is a national requirement that all Local Authorities complete and submit by 10th October 2013.
- 6.2 Not to share the Autism Strategy Self-Assessment with the Board, but this is also a national requirement.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 As a requirement of the Minister of State for Care & Support.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Letter from Minister of State for Care & Support, Norman Lamb MP, 2nd August 2013
2. Brighton & Hove Autism Self-Evaluation, 2013, Final version

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. The Autism Act (2009)
2. 'Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives', the strategy for adults with autism in England (2010)
3. The Scrutiny Panel on Services for Adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (March 2011)
4. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Adults with Autism (2011)
5. Brighton & Hove Joint Commissioning Strategy for Adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions 2012-2015