

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Services for Children with Autism Scrutiny Panel Report</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>22 April 2014</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>The Monitoring Officer</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Julia Riches</b>	<b>Tel: 29-0451</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Julia.riches@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 In December 2012, HWOSC agreed to establish a scrutiny panel to look at services for children with autism in the city. The panel was chaired by Councillor Rob Jarrett, and also included Councillor Anne Pissaridou, Councillor Andrew Wealls and Rosie Moore, Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Brighton, lead on inclusion and special educational need (co-opted member).
- 1.2 The scrutiny panel report is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That HWOSC endorse the scrutiny panel report on services for children with autism (**Appendix 1**) and refer it on for consideration by the appropriate policy committee(s).

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Panel set out to examine services for children with autism in the city across the board. Services and strategies in this area are evolving, both locally and nationally, and this report should be seen in this light. The Panel was very keen to avoid duplication but to add another dimension to the discussions.
- 3.2 The Panel held a capacity building meeting on 9 July 2013 to hear from service providers on how the pathways for assessment, diagnosis and support should work. They heard from parents and support groups on 17 and 19 September 2013 – both in public and private. They held three further meetings on 15 October 2013, 6 November 2013 and 19 November 2013 to hear from service providers and schools. They also attended two SENCO Forums on 30 January 2014 and 3 February 2014.

- 3.3 The Panel's report sets out key areas of concern and makes a number of recommendations for action around home support, available information, pathways to diagnosis, training and awareness.

#### **4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The Panel heard from the support groups in the city and from a number of parents, both in meetings and by email. No formal consultation process was undertaken by the Panel. A number of related consultations were ongoing during the Panel's inquiry.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 In line with normal procedure, we are asking that the HWOSC endorses this report and refers it on to the appropriate BHCC Policy Committee(s) for consideration.

#### **6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

The financial implications of the recommendations from the scrutiny panel will be assessed in the context of the Council's budget strategy when the recommendations are considered by the policy committees.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Anne Silley Date:*

##### Legal Implications:

- 6.1 Once HWOSC has agreed its recommendations based on the work of the scrutiny panel, it must prepare a formal report and submit it to the council's Chief Executive for consideration at the relevant decision-making body.

*Lawyer Consulted: Oliver Dixon Date: 11 April 2014*

##### Equalities Implications:

- 6.2 The impact on a family of having a child with autism can be huge. The number of children diagnosed with autism is rising and it is important that services are well positioned to help these families.

##### Sustainability Implications:

- 6.3 None identified in this covering report.

#### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

##### **Appendices:**

1. Services for Children with Autism Scrutiny Panel Report

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

### **Background Documents**

Services for Children with Autism Scrutiny Panel report Volume 2 contains the minutes and presentations from the Panel meetings.