



**Health and Wellbeing Board
14th November 2019**

Report sponsor: Andy Smith, Strategic Director of People Services

Report author: Yvonne Short, Lead Commissioner Accommodation

ITEM 06

Derby City Council – Autism Update November 2019

Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Derby City Autism Implementation Plan being delivered as part of the Joint Derbyshire Autism Strategy.

Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To provide a briefing on autism as required following the report on the Derbyshire Autism Strategy approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 2.2 To note the current national and local autism priorities for health and social care.
- 2.3 To agree the priorities identified in the revised Action Plan.

Reason(s)

- 3.1 A report on the Derbyshire Autism Strategy 2017-2020 was originally provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board in November 2017. A Derby City Autism Plan for Adults, incorporating those aged 14 – 18 preparing for adulthood, within Derby City was included. The action plan includes the new national recommendations in respect of the Capabilities Statement for Social Work with Autistic Adults.
- 3.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board has a crucial role to play in overseeing implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy and is central to ensuring the needs of people with autism are addressed locally. This includes developing the Health and Wellbeing strategies. As such they need to be cognisant of the current Action Plan and progress made although they do not need to formally sign it off.

Supporting information

- 4.1 Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others. Autistic people see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. If you are autistic, you are autistic for life; autism is not an illness or disease and cannot be 'cured'. Often people feel being autistic is a fundamental aspect of their identity. Autism is a spectrum condition. All autistic people share certain difficulties, but being autistic will affect them in different ways. Some autistic people also have learning disabilities, mental health issues or other conditions, meaning people need different levels of support. All people on the autism spectrum learn and develop. With the right sort of support, all can be helped to live a more

fulfilling life of their own choosing.

There are around 700,000 autistic people in the UK - that's more than 1 in 100. People from all nationalities and cultural, religious and social backgrounds can be autistic, although it appears to affect more men than women. Only 16% of autistic people gain full time employment and a 2016 National Autistic Society Survey reported that whilst 96% of the population stated that they understood autism only 17% of autistic people and their families felt understood. Many autistic people experience higher levels than average of anxiety and depression as a result of living with autism, higher level of loneliness and isolation. The Westminster Commission on Autism reported in 2017 that autistic people experience higher than average levels of physical ill health quoting studies which evidence a life expectancy of 12 years less than average. Whilst education, health and social care will identify those people with autism and a learning disability from an early age, those with autism but without a learning disability are not always identified. Where they are referred for assessment, their presenting needs may not render them eligible for personal health or social care budgets.

4.2 National Autism Strategy and Derbyshire's response

Autism is unique in that it is the only lifelong condition to be underpinned by statute, the Autism Act 2009 and by statutory guidance including Think Autism 2014 and subsequent guidance issued in 2015. However, the Act and Guidance applies to Adults only with autistic children being included within Children and Young People's legislation and the SEND reforms. This is likely to change when the new National Strategy is released. This was due to be issued in autumn 2019 but is currently delayed and is now likely to be released in early 2020. It is anticipated that this will require greater cohesion and co-ordination across and between services throughout the lifespan. Any changes resulting from the new National Strategy will need to be reflected in a refresh of the Derbyshire Strategy.

The Department of Health and Social Care led Autism Strategy Boards function is to monitor the effective implementation of the Strategy across the following areas:-

- Data and Research including diagnosis rates and waiting times, best uses of social care data, research on ill health and under diagnosis led by Public Health and Department for Health and Social Care
- Workforce Development for health and social care staff and staff in public facing organisations led by Health Education England and Skills for Care
- Health, Care and Wellbeing including Diagnosis, Assessment and Preventative Support led by NHS England
- Specific Support focusing on Work and Benefits, Criminal Justice and Public Transport – Led by Office for Disability Issues
- Participation in the Local Community including Reasonable Adjustments in Public Services, Local Health and Wellbeing and Partnership Boards, Preparing for Adulthood, Access to Autism Suitable Accommodation– led by

Association of Directors of Adult Social Services.

Derby City has a joint strategy with Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire CCGs and the strategy was based on the current national guidance, feedback from customer and family consultation, data from the JSNA. The Strategy was signed off by the Derbyshire Autism Partnership Board which includes people with autism and their advocates, and then approved at the November 2017 Health and Wellbeing Board. The current priorities for Derby: Derbyshire are, in brief, to:-

- Shorten the diagnostic waiting lists in line with NICE guidelines. i.e. diagnosis within three months of patient referral.
- Improve access to specialist diagnostic assessment and support. i.e. Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Psychology for sensory, cognitive and communication assessment and support.
- Improve timely access to community mental health support.
- Enable autistic people and their families to live well with autism.

4.3 **Autism Strategy Monitoring**

The main national tool for monitoring national strategy is the Public Health led Autism Self Assessment Framework. This requires every local authority to complete a self assessment of autism provision within the area, across a range of agencies not social care alone, against a set of questions designed to rate what services are provided locally when compared to national guidance and how effective they are. This enables progress to be monitored both at particular time points and across several years. The SAF returns have been previously reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board and monitored by the Derbyshire Transforming Care Partnership and Derbyshire Autism Partnership Board.

There have now been four SAF exercises. Whilst there has been consistent progress over the four SAF's, the 2018 exercise indicated a requirement for specific training in relation to Autism and this is therefore a priority area in the updated Action Plan. There is a need to prioritise development of the training offer as 2015 statutory guidance places a requirement on local authorities to provide general autism awareness training for all frontline staff, as well as specialist training for those in particular roles, including those undertaking needs assessments. A further SAF was expected to be issued in 2019 but has not yet been received. Once the SAF is received it will be completed and brought to the Health & Wellbeing Board at a subsequent meeting.

4.4 Autism Strategy Resources

Whilst Health and Social Care commissioners have a strong lead there are also expectations upon wider Council teams and external agencies from Health provider Trusts, specialist voluntary agencies, universal service providers and business communities to assist in improving the lives of people with autism and their families. However, there are currently no national dedicated resources for delivering the Autism Strategy. As previously, to progress the national and local priorities in the forthcoming financial year staff time will need to be allocated to this in order to develop and progress the identified actions. There may also be a requirement for a small financial resource to support some elements of the work required.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 The Autism leads in Derbyshire and co-chair of the Autism Partnership Board regularly meet self-advocates and collate the themes including good practice and areas for improvement. There was stakeholder engagement when developing the joint strategy but there has not been direct consultation around the revised action plan. There are plans for engagement and consultation with customers and other stakeholders around the revised strategy and the Derby City Action Plan.

Other options

- 6.1 Delivering the priorities of the national Autism Strategy and engaging with the SAF process is a requirement of localities from the Department of Health. Participation is productive in that it benchmarks local practice and identifies both the strength of the locality and areas for further development to improve the lives of those living with autism in the city. It also ensures that action plan progress can be monitored locally.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 Actions required as part of the implementation of the 2017-2020 Derbyshire Autism Strategy will be prioritised at the Transforming Care Partnership Executive Board. There are no dedicated additional resources for this work, however all partners are committed to contribute staff time and non financial resources where this is needed.

The Government has indicated (5/11/19) that £1.4million of funding will be made available to ensure that every NHS and Social Care worker will receive mandatory training relevant to their role but this will not be trialled until 2020 with no indication as to dates for a wider roll out. This was originally mooted in February 2019 and has been subject to public consultation. At this point there is no clarity whether this training will be directly commissioned by the Government or whether the funding will be distributed to Local Authorities and NHS Trusts

Legal implications

- 8.1 Autism has a statutory basis, the 2009 Autism Act with supporting guidance, Think Autism, issued by the Department of Health in 2014 and reinforced in 2015.

Other significant implications

- 9.1 There is a risk of an adverse finding from the Local Government Ombudsman Report should a complaint be made relating to a failure to deliver Autism specific training locally. In a recent report relating to Salford, it found that the local Council had failed to implement requirements for autism specific training causing injustice and made recommendations to address this including a payment to the complainant. Training has therefore been prioritised within the Derbyshire Action Plan.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	n/a	
Finance	n/a	
Service Director(s)	Kirsty McMillan, Service Director, People Services	5/11/2019
Report sponsor	Kirsty McMillan, Service Director, People Services	5/11/2019
Other(s) Heads of Service	Vickie Minion, Head of Preparing for Adulthood Catherine Young, Head of Commissioning	5/11/2019

Background papers:

- 1) City Action Plan Update November 2019
- 2) City Action Plan 2020
- 3) Derbyshire Autism Joint Adult Autism Strategy Refresh August 2017
- 4) House of Commons Briefing Paper 7172 Autism - overview of UK policy and services

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Derby City Autism Strategy Action Plan