

ADULTS AUTISM STRATEGY

To: **Adults Committee**

Meeting Date: **3 November 2015**

From: **Adrian Loades, Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **Not applicable** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To seek approval of the Cambridgeshire Adult Autism Strategy**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to approve the Cambridgeshire Adult Autism Strategy**

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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Autism, Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) are general terms used to describe a group of complex disorders of brain development. Autism affects, in varying degrees, how a person communicates verbally and non-verbally, and relates to other people. It also affects how people with the condition make sense of the world around them. Some people with autism are able to live independent lives and excel but others may have accompanying learning disabilities, mental health and physical health conditions and need long term specialist support.
- 1.2 Cambridgeshire's strategy for improving the lives of people with autism has traditionally formed part of the Learning Disability commissioning strategy. However as autism affects a range of people with different needs and in line with national guidance, work has been completed to create a single strategy that addresses the circumstances of people with autism as a distinct group.
- 1.3 The Adult Autism Strategy has been co-produced with people on the autistic spectrum, family carers and other relevant stakeholders. It includes an action plan that builds on a previous action plan designed to implement 'Leading Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives' (2010), the government's plan to put the requirements of the Autism Act into effect. It also addresses new national requirements arising from the publication of 'Think Autism' (2014) and the new 'Adult Autism Strategy: Statutory Guidance' issued in March 2015. As this work is an ongoing process some of the actions have been completed and these are indicated in the action plan itself

2.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 It is estimated that there will be about 6,500 people with autism in Cambridgeshire by 2016 and about 4,500 of these will be of working age. Over half will in addition have learning disabilities, physical disabilities or mental health problems. People with autism are more likely than the general population to be socially excluded, be unemployed; have poor physical health and experience poor housing conditions
- 2.2 Central government have brought forward a range of legislation and policy initiatives in order to improve the lives of people with autism. These include:
 - The Autism Act (2009)
 - Fulfilling and rewarding lives - the national strategy for autism (2010). Statutory guidance for implementing the national strategy (DOH Best Practice Guidance, Gateway 15204, 2010)
 - In June 2012 the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced clinical guidelines on the recognition, referral, diagnosis and management of people with autism. A key purpose of these guidelines was to provide evidence based recommendations to support the further implementation of the national autism strategy.
 - Think Autism (2014) – the governments update of Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives
 - Adult Autism Strategy: Statutory Guidance (2015)
- 2.3 Cambridgeshire has responded positively to these initiatives in the following ways:
 - Autism awareness training is available for staff working in health and social care and this is being more widely offered to libraries and other community services. The specific needs of people with autism are featured as part of local Care Management training and there is specialist autism training that is

relevant for those working in Learning Disability Services.

- There is a diagnostic pathway and a local diagnostic service for adults. There is also a social care and support pathway
- Two part time Autism Support Managers based at the Chitra Sethia Centre for Autism provide a link from diagnosis to support, care and assessment. They support people with a range of needs and aim to prevent or delay the development of care and support needs.
- The Adult and Autism Team (AAT) provides social care assessments for people with autism who do not have a diagnosed learning disability or mental health condition.
- An Autism Consortium is in operation that is fully inclusive and includes people with autism and family carers and other partners such as health, the police, Job Centre Plus and third sector providers. This is a positive forum with good engagement from all stakeholders. A 'Speak Up Spectrum' has been established so that people with autism and family carers are involved in co-production.

2.4 However, in order to fully comply with the most recent statutory guidance and to further improve the lives of people with autism, additional actions need to be undertaken and these are detailed below:

- Specialist training to be provided for frontline staff, including staff carrying out social care assessments.
- Implementation of Childrens and Families Act requirements for children with special educational needs and disability (SEND).
- Implementation of Care Act responsibilities in terms of assessment of needs for children and young people under 18 years of age.
- Additional preventative services in line with the Care Act responsibilities and Transforming Lives.
- Provision of clear advice and information that is accessible to people with autism and their carers in line with the Care Act.
- Advocacy services to be available to support involvement in needs assessments in line with the Care Act.
- Ensuring that employment is promoted as a positive outcome for children and young people with autism who have Education Health and Care (EHC) plans.
- Assess the care and support needs of adults with autism who are in prison and ensure that eligible needs are met.

3.0 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

3.1.1 There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

3.2.1 The report above sets out the implications for this priority in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 above.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

3.3.1 The report above sets out the implications for this priority in paragraphs 2.1, 2.3 and 2.4 above.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

4.1.1 The action plan will be delivered within current resource levels.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

4.2.1 The report above sets out the implications for this category in paragraphs 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 above.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

4.3.1 The aim of the strategy is to improve the lives of people on the autistic spectrum. The Community Impact Assessment outlines the impact of the strategy on a range of groups with protected characteristics.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

4.4.1 The report above sets out the implications for this category in paragraph 1.3 above

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

4.5.1 There are no significant implications within this category.

4.6 Public Health Implications

4.6.1 There are no significant implications within this category.

SOURCE DOCUMENTS GUIDANCE

Source Documents	Location
Autism Strategy and Action Plan 2015/16-2018/19	Copies are available in Members' Group Rooms
Community Impact Assessment	Copies are available in Members' Group Rooms