



## AGENDA

### SELECT COMMITTEE - AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

Thursday, 10th July, 2008, at 10.00 am

Ask for: Theresa Grayell or  
Gaetano Romagnuolo  
Telephone (01622) 694277 or  
694292

Darent Room - Sessions House, County Hall,  
Maidstone

*Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting, in the meeting room*

#### Membership

Conservative (5): Mr J D Simmonds (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, Mr M J Northey,  
Mr R A Pascoe and Dr T R Robinson

Labour (2): Mr G Cowan and Mrs E Green

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr S J G Koowaree

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

- 10.00 - 10.45 am Interview with Enrique Valles, Clinical Psychologist and Clinical and Strategic Lead for Learning Disability (Teams for People with Learning Disability, Assessment and Intervention Services and Psychological Services), Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (Pages 1 - 2)
- 11.00 - 11.45 am Interview with Jan Wright, Speech and Language Therapy Manager, East Kent, and Dr Jenny Brown, Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, East Kent (Pages 3 - 4)
- 12.00 noon - 12.45 pm Interview with Dr Alison and Mr Harry Macdonald, Parent Carers (Pages 5 - 6)

#### EXEMPT ITEMS

*(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)*

***At the end of the public session, Members of the Committee should remain in the meeting room for 20 minutes for summing up***

Peter Sass  
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership  
(01622) 694002

**Wednesday, 2 July 2008**

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## **ASD SELECT COMMITTEE**

### **Hearing 1**

**Thursday 10 July 2008**

#### **Witness Guide for Members**

*Below are suggested themes and questions. They have been provided in advance to the witnesses to allow them to prepare for the types of issues that Members will be interested to explore. All Members are welcome to ask these questions or pose additional ones to the witnesses via the Committee Chairman.*

#### **Themes and Questions**

**Mr Enrique Valles, Clinical and Strategic Lead for Learning Disability, Kent & Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust.**

- Please introduce yourself.
- Please discuss the variability in definitions and diagnoses of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- In what ways do different diagnoses affect eligibility mechanisms and service provision for people with ASD? In your view, are there any “gaps” in the services offered? If so, do these gaps affect any groups of people in the Spectrum in particular?
- Please describe the concepts of “Social Communication Disorder” and “Theory of Mind”.
- Please discuss some of the emotional, behavioural and interpersonal issues that can be related to people with autism (for example, the extent to which people with ASD can have a fulfilling life; the way our natural peer group can affect our sense of self; the consequences for happiness, distress and mental health when we feel we do not fit with those around us, etc.).
- What are the implications of the above issues - if any - for the development of services both for children (such as schools, after school activities, intervention services, etc.) and for adults (such as, employment, accommodation, intervention services, advice, etc.)?

- In your view, what kind of support, if any - should both families of children with ASD, and carers of adults with autism, receive?
- In your opinion, to what extent is local service provision in general being successful in dealing with people with autism in Kent?
- In your view, what initiatives and policies – if any - should Kent County Council adopt in order to meet the needs of people with autism in the County?

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#### **Themes and Questions**

**Dr Jennifer Brown, Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (East Kent), and Dr Jan Wright, Speech and Language Therapy Manager (East Kent).**

- Please introduce yourselves.
- What is autism? What is Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)? What is the prevalence of ASD in the population? Has this prevalence changed over time?
- How is autism diagnosed and assessed? Please outline the Care Pathway for children who have been diagnosed with autism.
- Please describe the common co-morbidities associated with autism.
- What are the differences – if any – between the experience of children diagnosed before school and that of children diagnosed later?
- Please expand on the management of children with ASD and severe learning difficulties; the management of those struggling in mainstream school; and the management of those “coping” in mainstream school.
- Please discuss both the input for parents and the input for schools with regards to ASD.
- In your view, how easy is it to find information about interventions, treatments and therapies?
- In your opinion, to what extent is local service provision in general being successful in dealing with people with autism in Kent?

- In your view, what initiatives and policies – if any - should Kent County Council adopt in order to meet the needs of people with autism in the County?

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#### **Themes and Questions**

##### **Mr Harry Macdonald, parent and carer**

- Please introduce yourself.
- Please provide an account of your own experience as a parent and carer of a person with autism.
- Please outline the kind of support your family and your son in particular received/are receiving from local agencies? How did you access this support? How easy was it to access?
- Is this support adequate? If not, what type of support would you like to receive?
- How did you set about choosing a school for a child with Asperger Syndrome? In your experience, to what extent do schools meet the needs of pupils with Asperger Syndrome? In your view, to what extent do schools meet the needs of pupils at the most severe end of the autistic spectrum?
- In your view, how easy is it to find information about interventions, treatments and therapies?
- In your opinion, to what extent is local service provision in general being successful in dealing with children with autism in Kent?
- In your view, what initiatives and policies – if any - should Kent County Council adopt in order to meet the needs of people with autism?

