

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

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?