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To: Adult Social Care and Public Health Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 20 September 2011

Subject: **AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER – “TWO YEARS ON” REPORT**

Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: This report is to update Members about the progress that has been made since the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) “One Year On” report. Since the latter report the Department of Health issued Statutory Guidance in December 2010, to Local Authorities, NHS organisations and Foundation Trusts on implementing the changes.

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## Introduction

1. (1) The Autistic Spectrum Disorder Select Committee reported to the County Council in March 2009. It made a total of 15 recommendations for further action to improve services to people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and their carers.

(2) Based on the Terms of Reference of the Select Committee a multi-agency ASD steering group was established to drive the changes.

(3) First year progress against these recommendations was reported to the Select Committee on 11 May 2010 and the Adult Social Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 June 2010.

(4) Since then, Statutory Guidance has been published and is currently informing the work of the ASD steering group, chaired by the Director of Older People and Physical Disabilities.

(5) The steering group consists of representatives from across Families and Social Care Directorate and Kent based NHS organisations. It has set up a number of sub-groups, each lead by a steering group representative to address various work streams. These sub-groups will consider and report back options for change on issues ranging from modifying existing services to make them more inclusive and responsive to people with ASD, to establishing specialist support for people with Aspergers

(6) Concurrently the public engagement aspect of the steering group is being developed, building on existing mechanisms such as the Learning Disability Partnership Boards and Mental Health Service User forums.

(7) The purpose of this “two year on” report is to inform Members of the Services & Public Health Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the progress that has been made so far on the Select Committee’s recommendations.

## Policy Context

2. (1) The Autism Act 2009 was the first ever piece of legislation designed to address the needs of one specific impairment group. It was followed by 'Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives': The strategy for adults with autism in England (March 2010))

(2) The national strategy is underpinned by the vision that:

'All adults with autism are able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within a society that accepts and understands them. They can get a diagnosis and access support if they need it, and they can depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals, helping them make the most of their talents.' ('Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives')

(3) The strategy acknowledged that change will be a long term process with the first year delivery plan acting as a driver.

(4) This was followed in December 2010 by "Implementing Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives": Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the autism strategy.

(5) This would be achieved by the following specific areas for action:

- increasing awareness and understanding of autism amongst staff,
- strengthening diagnosis and assessment of needs including establishment of clear pathway(s) with easy access, by 2013,
- continuing to improve transition support for young people with Autism,
- developing with partners local commissioning plans to deliver appropriate support services for adults with autism and their carers

(6) One of the underlying principles of the guidance is to make sure existing policies work for people with Autism to avoid new burdens or extra requirements on Health and Social care professionals.

## Summary of progress

3. (1) Specific actions that have and are been taken **Two Years On** are:

- Established a ASD Multi-agency Operational Group to drive the changes
- Created a link hosted on KCC website to provide information advice and guidance to the public
- Provided training to the majority of staff. This is continuing throughout 2011/12
- Provisionally identified an allocation from NHS monies transferred to Social Care to deliver Health outcomes, to support the establishment of a specialist service for people with Aspergers.
- Working on improving care pathways for people with autism. This includes improving transition arrangements for young people moving from children services to adult services.
- Continuing to help adults with autism into work – an essential priority, given the low numbers of adults with autism in employment.

## Conclusion

4. (1) Progress to date has been steady. KCC is continuing to work with local partners to meet the required outcomes as outlined in the Statutory Guidance

### Recommendation

5. Members are asked to NOTE the contents of the 'Two Years On' monitoring report.

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### *Appendices:*

Appendix 1 Autistic Spectrum Disorder 'Two Years On' Monitoring Report  
Appendix 2 Statutory guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the autism strategy (December 2010)  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_122847](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_122847)

### *Background documents:*

Autistic Spectrum Disorder – “One Year On” Report to ASD Select Committee, 11 May 2010 and Adult Social Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee 25 June 2010, Item C2

The 'Fulfilling and rewarding Lives': The strategy for adults with autism in England, March 2010  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_113369](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_113369)