

AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER SELECT COMMITTEE

Hearing 8

Wednesday, 8 October 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

Margaret Howard, Director of Commissioning and Provision, West Kent, Kent Adult Social Services

- Please introduce yourself and outline the duties and responsibilities that your post involves.
- Please explain how commissioning and provision mechanisms for adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are organised in Kent.
- How many adults with autism are currently receiving support from the local authority? In your view, how many adults with ASD, who could be eligible for support in Kent, are currently not receiving it?
- In what ways – if any – can eligibility processes and access to diagnostic assessments for adults with ASD be improved in Kent?
- It has been suggested to the Committee that there is a “gap” between Learning Disability and Mental Health service provision for people with ASD in the County. Do you agree? If so, in your view, in what ways can this issue be resolved?
- What consequences – if any – will the transfer of responsibility and funding for the commissioning of social care for adults with learning disabilities from the NHS to KCC have for adults with autism in the County?
- What, in your opinion, are the advantages and disadvantages of personal budgets and direct payments with regards to service provision to adults with ASD?
- What, in your view, are the benefits and challenges of offering supported living services to adults with autism?

- What are the main issues and challenges, if any, surrounding the transition of young people with autism into adulthood? What can KCC do to ease this transition?
- What are the main issues and challenges that people with autism face when looking for paid employment? In your opinion, what general initiatives and policies should Kent County Council adopt to help people with ASD find and retain employment?
- In your view, what other initiatives and policies should Kent County Council (KCC) adopt to improve its service provision to adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in Kent?