

**From:** Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

**To:** Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Decision Number: 16/00134

**Subject:** **THE STRATEGY FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM IN KENT (2016-2021)**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Social Care, Health and Wellbeing DMT/Accountable Officers Meeting - August 2016  
Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee - 6 December 2016 and 30 January 2017

**Future Pathway of Paper:** Cabinet Member decision

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** This report presents the Strategy for Adults with Autism in Kent which has been developed by the Autistic Spectrum Conditions Collaborative in response to national guidance.

**Recommendation(s):** The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health is asked to:

- a) **Approve** and **Adopt** the Strategy for Adults with Autism in Kent (2016-2021); and
- b) **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to refresh and/or make revisions as appropriate during its lifetime.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report presents the Strategy for Adults with Autism in Kent which has been developed by the Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) Collaborative in response to national guidance.
- 1.2 Following public consultation on the strategy and presentation to the Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee on 6 December 2016 this report presents the final changes to the strategy.

## **2. Findings from the Public Consultation**

- 2.1 An eight week public consultation period was held and 107 responses were received. 31 were from people with autism, 46 from carer/family members, and 20 from professionals, organisations and "other".

- 2.2 49% of all respondents felt that the whole of the strategy document was easy to understand, and a further 33% felt that 'most of the document was easy to understand'. The main comments related to the use of jargon and acronyms and were made by people with autism or family members.
- 2.3 Seven out of ten (71%) respondents were fairly/very confident that the strategy addresses the key issues, with 18% saying that they were very confident.
- 2.4 Respondents were asked to rate each of the 12 aims of the strategy according to their level of importance. The top five scores were given to:

Ensuring a smooth transition for young people with autistic spectrum conditions from Specialist Children's Services to Adult Services and from school to college;

- Ensuring that the views of people with autism and their families and carers are taken into account in the development of new policies, strategies and services
  - Providing better support for adults going through assessment and diagnosis for autism
  - Ensuring that all schools and colleges provide support so that more young people with autistic spectrum conditions can achieve qualifications
  - Enable Kent County Council to work together more effectively with agencies (E.g. health, police, the courts and probation).
- 2.5 There was a wide range of individual comments about issues that needed addressing and ideas on how services could be improved. These included for example:
- Better training for frontline reception staff
  - Improved access to Mental Health services
  - Help with dating and relationships
  - Developing local Autism champions
  - Establishment of one stop shops.
- 2.6 There was a high level of interest in receiving feedback about the consultation and wanting to be involved in working with the Council.

### **3. Actions taken in response to the Feedback**

- 3.1 The feedback received has in general given a very positive endorsement of the Strategy for Adults with Autism in Kent as a plan for improving the lives of people with autism in the county. Some final amendments have been made to the document which is attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 An Easy Read version of the Strategy for Adults with Autism in Kent has been produced and is attached as Appendix 2
- 3.2 A detailed list of issues and ideas for change and service improvements has been compiled for consideration by the ASC Collaborative and these will be addressed as appropriate within the Strategy Implementation plan.

3.3 A glossary of terms has been added in the light of the feedback on the use of jargon and acronyms.

3.4 Finally people who participated in the consultation will be given feedback on the findings and there will be future engagement with those interested in assisting the Council in this work.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

4.1 This is a high level document with broad strategic outcomes.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 It is a requirement for all Local Authorities to have a Strategy for Adults with Autism, as set out in the National Autism Strategy – ‘Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives’ (2010) - and to have a local plan in place.

#### **6. Equality Implications**

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the consultation process and is included in the background documents provided with this report.

#### **7. Implementation**

7.1 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health will be asked to take an Executive Decision to approve and adopt The Strategy for Adults with Autism in Kent (2016-2021).

7.2 A new Integrated Transformation Manager post for Neurodevelopmental Services (Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)) has been approved by Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Director Management Team and the Kent Clinical Commissioning Group Accountable Officers. This post will have a lead role in taking forward the implementation of the strategy and the move towards the increased integration of services with Health. The ASC Collaborative will also take on a new role as an Action Alliance to oversee and guide progress.

#### **8. Conclusions**

8.1 The Strategy for Adults with Autism in Kent (2016-2021) addresses the key requirements of the national Strategy and sets out a plan for the future to improve the lives of adults with autistic spectrum conditions in Kent. The consultation process ensured wider engagement with people with autism and their families and carers and the strategy has been revised in the light of this feedback.

## 9. Recommendation

**Recommendation(s):** The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health is asked to:

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b) **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to refresh and/or make revisions as appropriate during its lifetime.

## 10. Background Documents

Report to Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee – 6 December 2016

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s73789/ITEM%20C3%20-%20Cover%20Report%20Strategy%20for%20Adults%20with%20Autism.pdf>

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