

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Health Scrutiny Panel **DATE:** 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014

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### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

#### **‘Joining the Dots: Slough’s Joint Autism Strategy 2014-17’**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide the Health Scrutiny Panel with the opportunity to review and comment on the Autism Strategy for Slough Borough Council (SBC) and Slough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

##### **2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

- 2.1 Health Scrutiny Panel to comment on and endorse the Slough Joint Autism Strategy.

##### **3. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

- 3.1 Autism is a life-long invisible condition that affects how a person communicates with, and relates to other people. It also affects how a person makes sense of the world around them. Some people with autism are able to live relatively independent lives but others may have accompanying learning disabilities and need a lifetime of specialist support. The three main areas of difference, which all people with autism share, are difficulties with social communication, social interaction and social imagination. Many people with autism also experience sensory issues which can cause increased levels of anxiety.
- 3.2 This is the first Joint Commissioning Autism Strategy for Slough. It identifies five key priorities to improve local outcomes for people with autism and their families. These are:

**Local Priority Area 1: Improved Health and Wellbeing**

**Local Priority Area 2: Increased awareness and understanding of autism**

**Local Priority Area 3: Seamless transition processes**

**Local Priority Area 4: Improved social inclusion**

**Local Priority Area 5: Increased support for people with autism and their families**

3.3 The five priorities within the draft strategy support a number of national and local priorities as well as responding to legislative changes. These include:

- **The Autism Act 2009**, the first disability specific legislation, placed a duty on the Secretary of State to publish a strategy for adults with autism providing guidance for health bodies and local authorities on its implementation.
- **“Fulfilling and rewarding lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England 2010.”** This focused on five core areas:
  1. Increased awareness and understanding of autism amongst front line professionals.
  2. Develop a clear and consistent pathway for diagnosis in every area which is followed by the offer of a personalised needs assessment.
  3. Improving access to the services and support which adults with autism need to live independently in the community.
  4. Helping adults into work.
  5. Enabling local partners to plan and develop appropriate services for adults with autism to meet identified need and priorities.
- **“Think Autism Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives, the strategy for adults with autism in England: an update 2014”.** This updated strategy continues to focus on priorities outlined in the original strategy. However there is a renewed focus for cross government department activity in order to improve outcomes for people with autism. It outlines 15 priority challenges for action identified by people with autism. These are grouped under three areas :
  1. An equal part of my local community.
  2. The right support at the right time.
  3. Developing my skills and independence and working to the best of my ability.
- **Equality Act 2010** which requires all organisations that provide a service to the public to make reasonable adjustments to ensure they are accessible to everyone. This includes people with autism.
- **The Care Act 2014** which introduces new duties and responsibilities to local authorities in how care and support for adults is delivered. It embeds within statute national policy drivers which include a focus on well-being, prevention, independence and outcomes. The Act adopts a ‘whole family approach’, ensures more effective delivery of personalisation as well as increased rights for carers. The increased emphasis on preventive provision should improve outcomes for adults with autism as many people do not meet the eligibility threshold for adult social care support.
- **The Children and Families Act 2014** which introduces a number of changes in order to improve services for vulnerable children and their families. This includes transforming the system for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) including autism through a new SEN Code of Practice.

#### **4. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

4.1 The JSNA summarises national and local research identifying inequalities experienced by people with autism. These inequalities become particularly significant for many young people as they move on from childhood, as often, they find themselves “falling through” local services if they do not have either a learning disability or mental health condition. Valuing People Now, the government’s strategy for people with learning disabilities (2009), highlights how people with autism are more likely to experience social and economic exclusion as well as poor health outcomes. Without adequate support, they are at high risk of severe health and mental health problems, homelessness, and descent into crime or addiction.

4.2 The estimated numbers of people with autism living in Slough are as follows:

##### **Numbers of children diagnosed with autism in**

<b>Slough aged 2-18 years</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Total numbers (male and females)	58	403	450
Total school population		26,660	

##### **Numbers predicted to be autism spectrum in Slough aged 18-64 years**

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Total males	833	846	862	871	882
Total females	90	91	92	93	94
Total population of adults with autism aged 18-64	923	937	954	964	976

4.3 A report by the National Autistic Society summarises the lack of support adults with autism experience. As a result of this lack of support, they conclude:

- Two thirds of adults with autism (67%) say they have experienced anxiety because of a lack of support
- One third of adults with autism (33%) say they have experienced serious mental health problems because of a lack of support.

4.4 A local survey to support this strategy (2013) reviewed the needs of Slough people with autism. A number of respondents indicated that whilst they were happy with the support they received from children’s services, they experienced more difficulty accessing support as they moved into adulthood. There was also a gap in signposting to appropriate support after a diagnosis. The most common area of need identified by respondents were:

- More support for parents and carers.
- More information about what support and services are available
- More support at school/college
- Increased opportunities to tackle social inclusion and befriending
- Increased help in finding employment
- Need to raise awareness and understanding about autism amongst professionals.

## 5. Other Implications

### (a) Financial

5.1 Increasing pressure to use budgets more efficiently and effectively necessitates different approaches and more innovative ways of working. This includes greater collaboration between health and social care.

5.2 At the heart of this strategy is the need to ensure people with autism and their families have greater access to universal services in order to support their needs. Therefore in order to do this, there is a great emphasis on increasing local awareness and understanding about autism within Slough. Ensuring resources are allocated to deliver training and awareness programmes is critical to support the implementation of this strategy

5.3 The Children and Families Act necessitates the need to adopt a whole family approach through increased collaboration between Children and Adult services as well as health and education. Therefore there will need to be a continued emphasis on effective planning for young people as they move to adult services. The introduction of the single Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan will support this process.

### (b) Risk Management

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating action</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>Legal</b> SBC Council fails to <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have clear pathways in place to assess children and adults with autism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Currently established transition processes in place to support young people assessed as eligible for support as they move from children's to adult services.</li><li>• Adult Social Care has recently reviewed and developed pathways for support.</li></ul>	Recently appointed Autism Lead is reviewing processes to agree care coordination arrangements with Adult social care teams.
<b>Property</b> None		
<b>Human Rights</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adults with autism that are not eligible for support fail to be signposted to preventative and mainstream services.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active local programme of awareness raising about autism including working with mainstream services to improve access.</li><li>• Social group established and promoted providing support to adults with high functioning autism that may not be eligible for adult social care.</li></ul>	To continue to stimulate the market by working with local providers to create more tailored opportunities for people with autism.

<b>Health and Safety</b> None		
<b>Employment Issues</b> Adult Social Care, Children's services and other frontline staff do not have appropriately trained workforce to meet the needs of children and adults with autism	Rolling training programme in place for SBC social care, frontline staff and commissioned providers to increase understanding and awareness of autism.	To review the impact of training to ensure it improves outcomes for people with autism and their families.
<b>Equalities Issues</b> Service commissioned do not meet the needs of local people with autism.	Equalities Impact Assessment completed	To engage with people with autism and their families in future commissioning including preventative services.
<b>Community Support</b> Lack of engagement with the local community could result in local based services being unresponsive to needs.	There has been full engagement with key stakeholders throughout the development of the Strategy.	Ensuring people with autism and their carers have their own needs meet.
<b>Communications</b> If the publication of the strategy is not wide spread, there is a risk that it will loose impetus and not be fully implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full engagement of key stakeholders throughout consultations.</li> <li>• Summary of the strategy will be developed and circulated within the Slough Community.</li> </ul>	Keeping people with autism, their carers and key other stakeholders updated and involved in future service developments and commissioning processes.
<b>Community Safety</b> Local providers of services are not being adequately monitored and people with autism are not being appropriately safeguarded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers including supported living and preventative services have been evaluated through the tender process.</li> <li>• They will also continue to be monitored including providing quarterly performance data.</li> </ul>	Continue to develop supported living provision, employment and day opportunities through the Learning Disability Change programme.
<b>Financial</b> Resources to support people with autism are not adequate	Current review of how personal budgets are being organised within Adult Social Care. Will ensure more personalised opportunities for adults including those with autism and their carers eligible for	Opportunity to review personal budgets in view of the implementation of the Care Act.

	adult social care support.	
<b>Timetable for delivery</b> The strategy does not have a clear timetable for implementation	A detailed work plan has been developed to support the implementation of the strategy.	This is a three year strategy that will be reviewed regularly to ensure progress.
<b>Project Capacity</b> The strategy will require continued collaboration between different directorates within the Council and the CCG. Without clear governance arrangements to Health and Wellbeing Priority Development Group, accountable to the Wellbeing Board, it will be at risk of not being given adequate priority.	Autism Lead will oversee the implementation of the strategy supported by the Autism Partnership Board.	
<b>Other</b> None		

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

The Government is committed to delivering equity of access to treatment, prevention and promotion interventions, as well as equality of experience and outcomes across all protected groups. The Department of Health's Equality and Human Rights Assurance Group (EHRAG) uses the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) outcomes measures and indicators to support the development of an action plan to deliver statutory equality objectives. Slough Borough Council also uses the ASCOF as part of the contract monitoring process.

The development of the strategy ensured full consultation with service users and key stakeholders which had a positive influence in developing the priorities in the strategy. Feedback events on the consultation results were held and the useful information we have gleaned was shared.

(d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

An equalities impact assessment (EIA) has been completed.

This shows that the strategy would specifically affect people with regard to age and disability issues in enabling them to live more independently.

(e) **Workforce**

- 5.4 The redesigned Adult Social Care Customer Pathway will ensure clearer processes for adults with autism assessed as eligible for adult social care. Further work is underway in light of changes within the Care Act 2014 to ensure the council meets the increased duties and responsibilities to carers.

5.5 As identified above, the Children and Families Act 2013 require closer collaboration between Children and Adult Services and partner organisations including schools and health. This will also require the early identification of young people currently in receipt of social care likely to be eligible for support from adult services. Arrangements will need to be in place to respond to changes relating to children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) through the Code of Practice. The introduction of a single EHC plan will necessitate local authorities to jointly commission and plan services for children, young people and families. Parents and children eligible for support will also have the right to a personal budget.

## **6. Supporting Information**

### **6.1 Background to the strategy development**

6.1.1 Local Authorities are required to have local plans in place to support adults with autism. In Slough, it has been agreed to go beyond this requirement and adopt a more ambitious approach by developing a strategy relating to both children and adults. The reason for this is that people with autism often face obstacles starting at childhood. The aim is to take a more holistic approach, developing opportunities and realising potential for people with autism at all stages in their lives. This strategy also adopts an integrated and collaborative approach with health. It provides an opportunity to review and transform the way services are delivered in line with both national and local policy drivers. The strategy has considered :

- The major legislative changes for health and social care introduced in the **Health & Social Care Act 2012**.
- The legislative drivers directly related to carers, namely **the Care Act 2014** and the **Children and Families Act 2014**.
- The impact of Personalisation on both the cared for and their Carers.
- Slough's changing demographics and health needs shown in the JSNA.

### **6.2 Consultation**

6.2.1 This first strategy for autism has been developed through extensive consultation with people with autism who live in Slough, their carers and key stakeholders. This includes :

- SBC hosting a consultation event attended by over 80 people.
- Questionnaires undertaken to seek views of local people with autism and Carers.
- Partnership working with key stakeholders to identify priorities for future commissioning.
- Active contributions from the Slough Autism Partnership Board

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The Autism Commissioning Strategy clearly sets out the priorities for the Council and CCG to support people with autism over the next three years. It provides opportunities to:
- Ensure greater collaboration between health and social care so resources are targeted effectively to provide improved support for Carers
  - Help re-shape the market according to need to improve outcomes for people with autism
  - Ensure SBC and CCG are meeting responsibilities to people with autism and their Carers through changing legislation.
- 7.2 The strategy allows SBC and CCG to demonstrate commitment to the needs of people with autism to enable them to maximise their potential and lead fulfilling lives.
- 7.3 Extensive consultation has been undertaken with people with autism, their carers and other key stakeholders to inform the development of the Strategy. The results from the consultations have been reflected in the strategy's priorities.
- 7.4 The strategy, together with the action plan, will lead the delivery of the future commissioning of services which provide more flexible service provision, are relevant to current needs and link to the wider community.

## **8. Appendices Attached**

A - 'Joining the Dots: Slough's Joint Autism Strategy 2014-17'

## **9. Background Papers**

None