

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Slough Wellbeing Board

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FOR INFORMATION

‘JOINING THE DOTS: SLOUGH’S JOINT AUTISM STRATEGY 2014-17’

1. Purpose of Report

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

2. Update

- 2.1 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 in developing a strategy that relates 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:

1. The major legislative changes for health and social care through in the Health & Social Care Act 2012
2. The legislative drivers directly related to cares, namely the Care Act and the Children and Families Act.
3. The impact of Personalisation on both the cared for and their Carers
4. Slough’s changing demographics and health needs shown in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

- 2.2 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

- 2.3 The five priorities within the draft strategy support a number of national and local priorities as well as respond to legislative changes. These include:
- The Autism Act 2009, the first disability specific legislation, which 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 focuses 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 needs 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 introduced 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 2013-14 which introduced 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.

2.4 This strategy for autism has been developed through extensive consultation with Slough people with autism, their carers and key stakeholders. This includes :

1. SBC hosting a consultation event attended by 80 over people.
2. Questionnaires undertaken to seek views of local people with autism and Carers.
3. Partnership working with key stakeholders to identify priorities for future commissioning.
4. Active contributions from the Slough Autism Partnership Board
5. Participation of Slough CCG in the development of this strategy.

2.5 The strategy is supported by a detailed action plan which will be overseen by the Autism Partnership Board, accountable to the Slough Wellbeing Board. It is a challenging strategy that will require collaboration from key stakeholders to help drive forward implementation.

2.6 The strategy has been presented to and approved by both the Health Scrutiny Panel and the Slough CCG Board. It will be launched at a series of events in November 2014 subject to any comments by the SWB.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The draft 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:

1. Ensure greater collaboration between health and social care so resources are targeted effectively to provide improved support for Carers
2. Help re-shape the market according to need to improve outcomes for people with autism
3. Ensure the SBC and CCG are meeting responsibilities to people with autism and their Carers through changing legislation.

3.2 The strategy allows the SBC and CCG to demonstrate commitment to the needs of people with autism to enable them to maximise their potential and lead fulfilling lives.

- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.

4. Appendices Attached

- 4.1 'Joining the Dots: Slough's Joint Autism Strategy 2014-17' (in Appendices Pack)

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 None