

Cabinet Meeting

30 November 2016

Report title	Outcome of Autism Consultation and Final Autism Strategy
Decision designation	AMBER
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Sandra Samuels Adults
Key decision	Yes
In forward plan	Yes
Wards affected	All
Accountable director	Linda Sanders (People)
Originating service	Disabilities and Mental Health
Accountable employee(s)	Paul Smith, Interim Head of Commissioning Tel 01902 555318 Email paul.smith@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	PLT 12 September 2016 SEB 08 November 2016

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the adoption of the revised strategy.

Recommendations for noting:

The Cabinet is asked to note:

1. The feedback following consultation on the Joint Autism Strategy and the revision of the Strategy to take account of this.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of the consultation on the draft Joint Autism Strategy for consideration by Cabinet and to seek approval to adopt the revised strategy.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 This Joint Autism strategy was developed by partners in education, health and social care in the city to make sure that children, young people and adults with autism get the same life chances as people who do not have autism.
- 2.2 Autism is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition, it is a 'spectrum' disorder which means that individuals experience it differently and are affected in different ways. There are however some common challenges for people with autism. These include:
- social communication
 - social interaction
 - social imagination
- 2.3 Wolverhampton City Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are committed to commissioning high quality autism services and working with partner organisations to improve the lives and opportunities for children, young people and adults with autism.
- 2.4 The purpose of this strategy is to provide a clear plan outlining how support will be delivered in Wolverhampton and to identify objectives and actions which reflect local need and diversity, in line with the vision set out in the national "Think Autism Strategy" (2015).

"All children, adults and older 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."

3.0 Draft Autism Strategy

- 3.1 The draft Autism Strategy was a high level document designed to highlight key strategic priorities for consultation. They were:-

Objective 1 - Information, advice and support

Objective 2 – Develop a clear and consistent pathway including post diagnostic support

Objective 3 – Increasing awareness and understanding of Autism

Objective 4 – Preparing for Adulthood

Objective 5 – Lifelong Learning, increasing skills and inclusive employment

Objective 6 - Keeping Healthy

Objective 7 - Living well and increasing independence (Keeping Safe, Criminal Justice, Housing Support)

Objective 8 - Support for Families, Parents and Carers

- 3.2 These 8 Strategic Objectives formed the basis for our consultation and further explanation of these themes were available at the different consultation events.
- 3.3 Following agreement by Cabinet to begin a twelve-week consultation period a consultation plan was developed with key stakeholders. Consultation commenced on 7 June, and ended on 30 August 2016.
- 3.4 The full consultation report is available [here](#). An Executive Summary of the consultation report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 A variety of methods were used to share consultation information and to receive feedback. These included including paper-based consultation packs, emails, web-based applications including Survey Monkey, telephone calls, and the opportunity to contribute at two public meetings. Some targeted workshops also took place, for example to encourage the views of families at a local special school, and a specific workshop with ASPIC (Association of Specialist Provision in the City) members. An all-day drop-in shop was also held in a city-centre shopping centre.
- 3.6 Information about the consultation and associated resources was uploaded to the schools' website system 'The Cloud'; it was also uploaded to Wolverhampton Information Network (WIN) and the Council's internal and public websites and social media outlets Wolverhampton Today. A press release was issued by the Communications Department on 13 June 2016.
- 3.7 Information was circulated twice by email to 152 representatives at a variety of organisations and groups. This included the Commissioning Support Unit which supports Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). E-bulletins were also sent out by Youth Organising Wolverhampton (YOW), Wolverhampton Information, Advice & Support Service and Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council (WVSC).

4.0 Outcome of Consultation

4.1 The consultation feedback told us that:

- More information is needed about the range of health, education, social care, leisure, employment and training opportunities available and that its provided in a variety of formats and held in a central place.

The Joint Autism Strategy has been amended to include the need to widen the scope of Wolverhampton Information network (WIN) and the Local Offer (SEND) and that the information is to be made available in different formats where possible.

- There is a need for better early identification and support post diagnosis, including review and follow up to ensure that people are receiving the right support.

The Joint Autism Strategy has been amended to include that we will commission a National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) compliant diagnostic pathway for children, young people and adults, and to ensure that referrers have information about how to support a person who has received /or has not received a diagnosis, and their family.

- There is a need for more training for providers of services to children, young people and adults with autism, and for this training to include education, further education, employers, criminal justice services, health, community services and leisure.

The Joint Autism Strategy has been amended to ensure that various levels of training are developed and delivered, including a specialist autism programme to increase awareness across all relevant agencies and enable key professionals to recognise, assess and support people with autism.

- There is a need for opportunities for parents and carers to receive training, particularly in relation to positive behavioural support, and accessing education and employment.

The Joint Autism Strategy has been amended to include sufficient and consistent access to specialist support services, including outreach and therapies, for all children and young people with autism and their families who attend all educational settings.

- There is a need for consistent opportunities for children, young people and adults to contribute to service development and change, and to be meaningfully included as equal partners in decisions about their care, support and future.

The Joint Autism Strategy includes the need to make sure that the parents and carers of people with autism are encouraged and supported to influence and shape future services and to be fully engaged in the coproduction of the Implementation Plan to deliver this strategy as well as future commissioning of Autism provision.

- There is a need for transition to be fully recognised as a challenging time for young people and their families, and for additional support to be provided to help families to transition between children's' and adult services.

The Joint Autism Strategy has at its heart that all young people on the autistic spectrum who are preparing for adulthood should have access to quality

assured work experience to help them prepare for their transition into further education employment or training and the support to live independently should they choose as well as living healthy and exciting lives.

- There is a need for clear partnership working between different organisations so that a family's experience of care and support is consistent and seamless.

The Joint Autism Strategy recognises the strong Partnership working in the City and that Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are committed to commissioning high quality autism services. working with partner organisations, to improving the lives and opportunities for children, young people and adults with autism.

- There is a need for on-going commitment to proactively reviewing care and support plans, and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCs).

The Joint Autism Strategy reflects this ambition but has been amended to include that young people on the autistic spectrum and who are not in receipt of an Education Health and Care plan are identified early and are fully supported to maximize their potential.

- There is a commitment to ensure that people with autism can access the full range of services and support available to the general population, with good and timely access to specialist services where appropriate.

The Joint Autism Strategy includes reference to WIN and the Local Offer as the vehicle to deliver this ambition.

- There is a need for an autism champion to be appointed within the City.

The Joint Autism Strategy includes the need for an Autism Action Alliance preferably with an Independent Chair who would be the Autism Champion for the City.

- There is a need for more autism friendly venues within the City – which take account of sensory issues – so that people with autism can participate more fully in everyday opportunities, and can manage sensory difficulties relating to their autism more positively when attending appointments.

This ambition would form part of the agenda for the Autism Action Alliance in the City very much replicating the work of the Wolverhampton Dementia Action Alliance.

- There is a need for more evidence of reasonable adjustments being made to support people with autism leading active, contributing lives in their communities.

The Joint Autism Strategy includes the need for people with autism to live healthy, active lives and contribute to the communities in which they live.

- There is a need for more creative, person-specific alternatives to traditional care and support models; for example, the ability to offer blood collection at schools, creating personalised breaks.

The Joint Autism Strategy recognises the need for future service design to be coproduced with children, young people and their families as well as professionals, for example our specialist schools, to encourage creativity in future service models.

- There should be support for advocacy across the range of settings and services.

The Joint Autism Strategy identifies Connexions as the source of advocacy support across a range of settings and services.

- The need to cross reference the Key themes of the Autism Strategy to the CAMHS Transformation Plan, the All Age Disability Strategy and the Black Country Transformation Care Plan (adults and children).

The Joint Autism Strategy's Implementation Plan will include this as a key action for those Lead Commissioners who have responsibility for these themes.

4.2 A copy of the finalised Joint Autism Strategy is available [here](#). It is our intention to develop a co-produced Implementation Plan to deliver the key themes of the Strategy with a target date of April 2017 for changes to go live.

4.3 The Joint Autism Strategy will be reported at the Clinical Commissioning Group's Commissioning Committee on the 24 November 2016 and at its Governing Board on the 10 January 2017.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report. However, financial plans will need to be developed as part of the development of the implementation plan (due to be developed in co-production with children, young people and their parent/carers by December 2016). It is anticipated that the delivery of the new strategy will be within the existing financial resources.

[GS/21112016/F]

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 This strategy supports the City Council and the CCG in the delivery of their statutory duties in relation to the Autism Act 2009 and the supporting national “Think Autism Strategy” 2015. RB/09112016/M

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 There are equalities implications associated with this report as it relates to disabled children, young people and adults. An Equalities Analysis is being updated taking into account the consultation feedback.

8.0 Environmental implications

8.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

9.1 There are no human resources implication’s associated with this report

10.0 Corporate landlord implications

10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications associated with this report.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

11.1 Cabinet Report – Consultation on the Joint Autism Strategy, 24 February 2016

Appendix One - Autism Provision: Consultation on the draft Joint Autism Strategy 2016 – 2021 Consultation Report – Executive Summary