

Swindon Adult Autism Strategy

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 8 July 2015

Author: Director of Public Health

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To inform the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) about the Swindon Adult Autism strategy 2015 – 2018 (Appendix One).
- 1.2 Local authorities and NHS bodies have a duty to take account of the statutory guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support the implementation of the national Adult Autism Strategy “Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives: The Strategy for Adults with Autism in England” 2010 as updated by Think Autism (2014).
- 1.3 The Swindon strategy outlines our local commitment to the national vision that “All 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”.
- 1.4 This strategy links with the Health and Wellbeing Strategic priorities, in particular that ‘Adults and Older people are living healthier and more independent lives’ and ‘Improved health outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable communities’.

2. Recommendations

The Board is recommended to:

- 2.1 Recommend to Cabinet and the Governing Body of Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group that they adopt the Swindon Adult Autism strategy 2015 – 2018.

3. Detail

- 3.1 Autism occurs early in a person’s development. It affects the way a person communicates with, and relates to, other people. It also affects how they make sense of the world around them. It is estimated that around 1% of the population in England have autism. This is equivalent to approximately 2,300 adults and children in Swindon.
 - 3.2 Autism affects people in different ways; some can live independently without any additional support, while others require a lifetime of specialist care. It is estimated that one in three of adults with a learning disability have autism.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Weld, Direct Dial Telephone 01793 444629, sweld@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 3.3 A significant proportion of adults with autism across the whole autistic spectrum experience social and economic exclusion. Improving access to local support and services is important to develop the skills and independence of adults with autism in Swindon and prevent, delay or reduce the care needs of them and their carers
- 3.4 This strategy, informed by the Adult Autism JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) 2015, has been developed by the Swindon Autism Partnership Board which is a multi-agency group which includes Swindon Borough Council, Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group, SEQOL, representatives from the voluntary sector and local community and people from across the autism spectrum and their carers.
- 3.5 The Autism Strategy for Swindon sets out local actions to achieve the national vision that: “All 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”
- 3.6 Although the focus of this strategy is on adults with autism it has also been informed by The Children and Families Act 2014¹, particularly with regard to duties relating to transition and preparing for adulthood.
- 3.7 The national strategy 2014 review highlights fifteen priority challenges for action which have been identified by people with autism, carers, professionals and others who work with people with autism. These are:

An equal part of my local community

- 3.7.1 I want to be accepted as who I am within my local community. I want people and organisations in my community to have opportunities to raise their awareness and acceptance of autism.
- 3.7.2 I want my views and aspirations to be taken into account when decisions are made in my local area. I want to know whether my local area is doing as well as others.
- 3.7.3 I want to know how to connect with other people. I want to be able to find local autism peer groups, family groups and low level support.
- 3.7.4 I want the everyday services that I come into contact with to know how to make reasonable adjustments to include me and accept me as I am. I want the staff who work in them to be aware and accepting of autism.

¹ The Children and Families Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

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3.7.5 I want to be safe in my community and free from the risk of discrimination, hate crime and abuse.

3.7.6 I want to be seen as me and for my gender, sexual orientation and race to be taken into account.

The right support at the right time during my lifetime

3.7.7 I want a timely diagnosis from a trained professional. I want relevant information and support throughout the diagnostic process.

3.7.8 I want autism to be included in local strategic needs assessments so that person centred local health, care and support services, based on good information about local needs, is available for people with autism.

3.7.9 I want staff in health and social care services to understand that I have autism and how this affects me.

3.7.10 I want to know that my family can get help and support when they need it.

3.7.11 I want services and commissioners to understand how my autism affects me differently through my life. I want to be supported through big life changes such as transition from school, getting older or when a person close to me dies.

3.7.12 I want people to recognise my autism and adapt the support they give me if I have additional needs such as a mental health problem, a learning disability or if I sometimes communicate through behaviours which others may find challenging.

3.7.13 If I break the law, I want the criminal justice system to think about autism and to know how to work well with other services.

Developing my skills and independence and working to the best of my ability

3.7.14 I want the same opportunities as everyone else to enhance my skills, to be empowered by services and to be as independent as possible.

3.7.15 I want support to get a job and support from my employer to help me keep it.

3.8 Local actions are focused on 7 key areas:

3.8.1 Evidence led planning, commissioning and service provision

3.8.2 Training and awareness raising to improve understanding of autism amongst professionals and the public.

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- 3.8.3 Ensuring that the right support for people with autism in Swindon is available at the right time during their life time.
- 3.8.4 Transition planning and support for young people with autism as they prepare for adulthood.
- 3.8.5 Employment and education opportunities for adults with autism
- 3.8.6 Working with the criminal justice system
- 3.8.7 Housing and support to live independently
- 3.9 Each of these areas is underpinned with a suite of outcomes and proposed actions outlined in the strategy.
- 3.10 The Autism Partnership Board will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the action plan to deliver the priorities identified in the Strategy.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not to support the Swindon Adult Autism strategy 2015 – 2018.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications arising from development of the strategy.. Local Authorities face significant financial challenges over the coming years and will need to ensure the requirements of the Strategy are completed in a way that does not require additional resources or potentially could improve outcomes for people with autism without the need for local authority funding.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human rights have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations within this report are compatible with Convention Rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There should be no significant staffing or other implications arising from this report

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Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 A diversity impact assessment is in process. No adverse or significant issues have been identified to date.

Risk Management

- 5.5 No specific risks were identified at this stage for the report.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix One. Draft Swindon Adult Autism strategy 2015 – 2018.