

Subject:	Executive Response to the report of the Scrutiny Panel on Services for Adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions		
Date of Meeting:	17 March 2011		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Services/Lead Commissioner, People		
Contact Officer:	Name: Angela Flood	Tel: 29-0790	
	E-mail: angela.flood@brighton-hove.gov.uk		
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Note: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Council Procedure Rule 7, Access to Information Rule 5 and Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act as amended (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) were that the scrutiny report on Adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions, to which this report provides an executive response, was endorsed by the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2011; this meant that it was not available to be included as part of the Cabinet papers published on 9 March 2011, and has consequently been published as a late report.

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report sets out the executive response to recommendations made by the scrutiny panel established to investigate issues relating to the diagnosis, treatment, care and support of adults with autism.
- 1.2 The scrutiny panel report on adults with autism is included as **Appendix 1** to this report; a detailed response to each panel recommendation is included as **Appendix 2**.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the scrutiny panel report on adults with autism and its recommendations (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees the responses to these recommendations set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 In 2010 the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee (ASCHOSC) agreed to set up a scrutiny panel to look at issues relating to the

assessment, treatment care and support of adults with autism. The panel's work was informed by the 2009 Autism Act, which set out a number of changes to be introduced to services for adults with autism.

- 3.2 The panel consisted of: Cllr Harmer-Strange (Chairman), Cllr Meadows, Cllr Phillips and Cllr Watkins. The panel held six meetings in public, receiving evidence from clinicians, academics, NHS and social care commissioners, and third sector support and advocacy organisations. Members were very eager to hear from people with autistic spectrum conditions (ASC) and accordingly devoted two meetings to talking to a number of people with ASC and their families and carers.
- 3.3 The scrutiny report on adults with autism is to be warmly welcomed: the report is comprehensive, drawing widely on evidence from eminent professionals in the field as well as from a large number of people with direct experience of local autism services. Work undertaken by the Panel has already proved influential (for instance in terms of informing the autism needs assessment currently being undertaken as part of the JSNA).
- 3.4 A point-by-point response to the panel's recommendations is included as **Appendix 2** to this report. It is important to note that, although the council's executive broadly supports the scrutiny panel recommendations, it has not been possible to give an unequivocal response or to set out a timetable for implementation for a number of the recommendations.
- 3.5 This is for three reasons: firstly because work is still ongoing on significant aspects of local autism planning, including the autism needs assessment; secondly because autism services are typically 'partner' services involving the council, local health bodies and the third sector (and hence a high degree of joint decision making); thirdly because work is currently being undertaken to implement the recently published statutory guidance pursuant to the 2009 Autism Act.
- 3.6 Whilst we do not anticipate any problems in terms of the scrutiny panel recommendations, city partners in autism services do need to take the time to ensure that they implement the guidance fully and are not too hasty in agreeing sensible measures without being certain that they are in accordance with the guidance.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken in preparing this report.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report and the development of a joint Local Autism Strategy. However, funding for additional costs of actions arising in due course would need to be identified from existing resources and where possible external sources. It is envisaged that the development of the joint strategy would result in efficiencies for all involved.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michelle Herrington

Date: 10/03/11

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The relevant statutory provisions, policy and guidance governing the assessment, treatment, care and support for people with autistic spectrum conditions are specifically referred to in the body of this report and appendices. There are no additional specific legal or Human Rights Act implications arising.

Lawyer Consulted: Sandra O'Brien Date: 9 March 2011

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 It is believed that adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) and their families face many difficulties in their daily lives, including barriers to accessing services, public misconceptions and lack of awareness of the condition, and difficulties in gaining long-term and meaningful employment as well as having a good quality of life.
- 5.4 The Overview & Scrutiny Panel found that people “with ASC often do not have equality of access to, and quality of response from, local services and health care. This is, however, a national issue and not just one for Brighton & Hove.” The development of a local commissioning strategy will aim to address many of the issues highlighted in the report. This will help to ensure that people with an ASC have equal access to services.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 None identified

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 None identified

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 None identified

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The Intelligent Commissioning model will provide opportunities to look at how services for people with ASC are provided and commissioned across the authority.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 None

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To detail the Response to the Recommendations in the Scrutiny Panel Report on Adults With Autism

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Scrutiny Panel Report on adults with autism and its recommendations
2. Executive Response to the Scrutiny Panel Report on Adults With Autism

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Autism Act 2009
2. 'Fulfilling and rewarding lives': the strategy for adults with autism in England (2010)
3. Brighton & Hove Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Adults with Autism (DRAFT)
4. Brighton & Hove Autistic Spectrum Conditions Survey 2011 (DRAFT)