

REPORT FOR DECISION

Agenda Item	
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DECISION OF:	The Cabinet
DATE:	10 April 2013
SUBJECT:	Bury Adult Autism Strategy 2013-16
REPORT FROM:	Cllr Rishi Shori, Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Wellbeing
CONTACT OFFICER:	Julie Gonda, Assistant Director Commissioning and Procurement, Adult Care Services
TYPE OF DECISION:	CABINET (KEY DECISION)
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This report is within the public domain
SUMMARY:	<p>This report seeks the approval of the Bury Adult Autism Strategy 2013-16. The strategy is jointly owned by the local authority and NHS Bury.</p> <p>The strategy has been written in response to the National Autism Strategy "<i>Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives</i>" in 2010. This strategy has 5 key areas prioritised by Government and comes with statutory requirements for local authorities in providing and developing services for people with autism.</p> <p>The purpose of this strategy is to provide a basis for partnership working on the provision of services, support and signposting for adults with autism in Bury.</p>
OPTIONS &	1. Approval of the Bury Adult Autism Strategy

RECOMMENDED OPTION	<p>2013-16. This is the recommended option.</p> <p>2. Approval of the Bury Adult Autism Strategy 2013-16 with amendments.</p> <p>3. Do not approve the Bury Adult Autism Strategy 2013-16. This will delay the implementation of the strategy and action plan.</p>
IMPLICATIONS:	<p>The approval of the strategy will allow us to work on the action plan and thus put in place changes to enhance and improve the lives of adults with autism in Bury. It will also enable us to meet our statutory obligations as stated in the statutory guidance for National Autism Strategy: Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives: The Strategy for Adults with Autism in England (2010).</p>
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	<p>Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes</p>
Statement by the S151 Officer:	<p>Whilst there is no new funding attached to the implementation of this strategy, the majority of the actions will be achieved by greater partnership working and investigating new ways of working. This is particularly true in the case of awareness raising, social activity and information.</p> <p>The main risk lies in not publishing the Bury Adult Autism Strategy as the Council would not meet its statutory obligations.</p>
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	<div style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></div>
Equality/Diversity implications:	<p>Yes No (see paragraph below)</p>
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> JH</p> <p>When considering the Strategy and Action Plan Members must have due regard to the matters set out in the equality assessment, relating to the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and in the context of the consultation responses.</p>
Wards Affected:	<p>All wards</p>

Scrutiny Interest:	
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TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR:

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet/Committee	Council	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2010, The Department of Health published "Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives: The Strategy for Adults with Autism in England (2010) and Statutory Guidance (2011)". This national strategy and subsequent statutory guidance, sets out to improve access to services and ensure that adults with autism are able to benefit fully from mainstream public services.
- 1.2 This strategy has been developed by Bury Adult Care Services in conjunction with NHS Bury and the Autism Services Development Group. This Group includes members from Adult Care Services, Education, Communication Difficulties staff, Psychology, CAHMS, Additional Needs Team, Youth Services, and Children's Services, Carer representatives, health colleagues and the National Autistic Society.

2. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

The Bury Adult Autism Strategy focuses on five core areas of activity as outlined in the National Strategy:

- 1. Increasing awareness and understanding of autism among frontline professionals.
- 2. Developing a clear, 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 within the community.
- 4. Helping adults with autism into work.
- 5. Enabling local partners to plan and develop appropriate services for adults with autism to meet identified needs and priorities

In short, the aims of the strategy are to:

- Ensure that people have a better understanding of autism. This includes everyone from frontline staff, Job Centre Plus, receptionists, GPs and social workers.
- Develop a local diagnosis pathway for adults with autism including post diagnostic support, sibling screening and reassessments
- Develop new opportunities for social activity by working with partners
- Ensure information is timely, accessible and relevant
- Develop better access to universal services
- Dispel negative perceptions of services and of autism
- Develop more opportunities for employment, education and volunteering
- Develop robust data collection systems

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Bury Adult Autism Strategy has been developed in collaboration with a range of stakeholders and has sought to capture the range of views expressed. However, there are some issues that still need further work as listed below:

3.1 Data Collection:

Currently specific, reliable data on people with autism is not collected in Bury. This is a similar picture across the UK. Therefore it is difficult to understand the numbers of people with autism in Bury, what their needs are and how they are being met, if these services are appropriate and if there are unmet needs. Adult Care Services are in the process of implementing a new case management system which will enable better recording of data in future. It is also envisaged that autism will be included as a category within the JSNA in future.

3.2 Customer and Carer Perceptions of Services

The results of the consultation showed that on the whole adults with autism and carers of adults with autism have a very negative perception of services in Bury. People noted that they envisaged it would be difficult to get information, appropriate housing or employment support even if they had never tried to access these services. Work will be undertaken with our customers, carers and other stakeholders to offer more information and advice on services and what is available in order to dispel the negative perceptions they hold.

3.3 General Public Perceptions

Autism is a disorder which is generally misunderstood by the general public, therefore people may have negative perceptions of what autism is and how it affects the people who have autism. We will seek to publicise good news stories by people with autism and promote their talents to employers and others in Bury to try to dispel the myths around autism. We can do this by publishing case studies, general awareness raising and including people with autism and their carers in consultations and in the developing and delivering of training.

3.4 Awareness Raising amongst partners and the general public

A challenge will be to raise awareness of autism amongst our partners both within the council and outside the council. The Autism Services Development Group will develop a plan to offer different ways to raise awareness of autism

and the importance making reasonable adjustments with partners such as Job Centre Plus, employers and leisure services as well as general awareness raising activities.

The awareness training will be available to all staff in the council and health and the mid-level training will be offered to frontline health care professionals.

3.5 Resources

The current NHS and Local Authority data collection systems do not report on existing expenditure for services for people with autism. This is because the spend information is included within Mental Health and Learning Disability services.

Although there is no new funding attached to the implementation of this strategy, the majority of the actions will be achieved by greater partnership working and investigating new ways of working. This is particularly true in the case of awareness raising, social activity and information.

Funding will be sought via the Clinical Commissioning Group for a local diagnosis pathway in Bury.

4. CONSULTATION

Bury Adult Care Services undertook a 12 week consultation with stakeholders commencing on 6 March 2012. The consultation was aimed at carers, professionals and customers to collect their views and experiences of services and support for people with autism in Bury.

The consultation with people with autism, carers of people with autism and professionals who work with people with autism consisted of:

- An event on 7 March 2012 based on the key themes within the National Strategy. This was attended by over 80 stakeholders including customers, carers and professionals. The aim was to gather experiences, views and suggestions.
- Questionnaires were produced for customers, carers and professionals. People were able to complete these online, by post or via the telephone.
- Seven drop in sessions were held to enable people to talk to someone confidentially and/or get help to complete a questionnaire.

The consultation was advertised widely by post, email, facebook, twitter, on the website, in public buildings, newsletters and via poster.

It was particularly difficult to specifically target people with autism and their carers due to the lack of data recorded on people with autism in Bury. Therefore we had to ensure we reached as many people in Bury as possible. Although the strategy is for Adults aged 18+, we did not restrict the consultation to adults with autism or carers of adults with autism as we felt the views of the whole population of Bury would enable the strategy to reflect what is currently available and what is required for the future. Following the

consultation, there were 73 professionals from across health, social care, the private and voluntary sectors, 23 customers and 41 carers who responded to the survey, together with separate results from the consultation event and the drop in sessions (Strategy Appendices 3A and 3B).

The draft strategy was then produced based on the results of this consultation and sent out for further consultation from 10 December 2012 to 7 January 2013. It was sent to all the people who took part in the first consultation, EA groups and community groups.

5. RISK

5.1 The main risk if we do not publish the Bury Adult Autism Strategy is that we would not meet our obligations as published in the Statutory Guidance of Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives, 2010.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The community (both current and future customers) will benefit from an increased awareness of autism. Through training and awareness raising, staff in ACS and health along with other partners will have a greater understanding of autism and how to communicate in an appropriate manner with people with autism.

It was raised in the consultation that there is a lack of understanding and recognition of autism within BME communities. With increased awareness raising initiatives, people should have a greater understanding.

The strategy looks to enable people with autism to live more independently and safely within their community and offer more opportunities for work and social activity.

The strategy aims to create opportunities for creating robust partnerships with existing groups and services to help develop support networks for carers of people with autism.

The strategy aims to enable people to become "part of their community" through awareness raising to dispell misunderstanding amongst the general public.

7. CONCLUSION

The publication of the Bury Adult Autism Strategy 2013-16 aims to improve the lives of adults with autism in Bury by offering them greater opportunities to become part of their community and be understood by the people around them.

The strategy will be monitored by the Autism Services Development Group who will report progress to Adult Care Services Senior Management Team, Learning Disability Partnership Board and Mental Health Steering Group as required.

List of Background Papers:-

- Bury Adult Autism Strategy 2013-16
- Action Plan
- Appendices 1, 2 and 3
- Equality Analysis

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