



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

Date of Meeting	25 May 2021
Report Title	Aberdeen City Autism Strategy Update Report
Report Number	HSCP.21.050
Lead Officer	Kevin Dawson, Lead for Community Mental Health, Learning Disabilities & Substance Misuse Services
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Consultation Checklist Completed	Yes
Directions Required	No
Appendices	Appendix A – Action Plan Appendix B – Adult Autism Assessment Team update/pathways Appendix C – Transitions update

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides an update to the Integration Joint Board on the implementation of the Aberdeen City Autism Strategy and Action Plan 2019-22.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board (IJB):

- a) Note the report and the information on progress against the action plan as presented in Appendix A.
- b) Note that an interim update report will be provided to Clinical and Care Governance Committee in November 2021.



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3. Summary of Key Information

- 3.1. The Aberdeen City Autism Strategy and Action Plan 2019-22 (Appendix A) was approved by the Integration Joint Board (IJB) on 11 December 2018 and by ACC Operational Delivery Committee in January 2019 and commenced implementation from April 2019.
- 3.2. Since the last update provided to IJB on 24 March 2020 the way in which services are delivered across the health and social care sector have changed due to Covid-19. The developments planned for Autism Assessment services were delayed due to critical pandemic response services taking priority. Oversight of the Autism Strategy implementation moved to Leadership and Operational meetings within Mental Health and Learning Disability services.
- 3.3. Following a review of the Action Plan (aligned to pandemic response service reviews held in March 2020) to ascertain priorities, preparatory work took place to create the Adult Autism Assessment Team. Recruitment took place in late 2020 and post-holders were appointed and commenced work in early January 2021.
- 3.4. The Adult Autism Assessment Team have developed relevant referral and assessment pathways in conjunction with the National Autism Implementation Team. The Team is multidisciplinary, with a clinical lead appointed, in addition to a project support role. Further information on the Team and the progress to date can be found in Appendix B.
- 3.5. Post-diagnostic support is available following diagnosis. Work is ongoing nationally on the provision of post-diagnostic support and the Adult Autism Assessment Team will link into this work.
- 3.6. The Adult Autism Assessment Team is funded through Scottish Government non-recurring monies aligned to the implementation of the national Autism Strategy. Diagnostic services are a key priority nationally and there may be further opportunities to bid for monies aligned to transformational change. The funds received are being monitored closely to ensure best value in service provision established. The Assessment service forms a test of change, and evaluation of the Team, processes, referral and diagnosis rates will be undertaken and inform any future planning, including budgetary planning.
- 3.7. The Scottish Government recently published the report [Learning/Intellectual Disability and Autism Towards Transformation](#). The Cross Party Group on



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Autism have also published their review of the Scottish Strategy for Autism, [The Accountability Gap](#). Both reports provide recommendations and actions focused on ensuring autistic peoples human rights are respected, protected and advanced. Dedicated work is also taking place on transitions for young people with additional support needs, including autism with further detail provided in Appendix C.

- 3.8. Within 2021-22 the Aberdeen City Autism Strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed in line with the refresh of the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) Strategic Plan and other related planning activity (such as the Local Outcome Improvement Plan), as well as within the context of the aforementioned national policy reviews and potential legislative changes.

4. Implications for IJB

- 4.1. **Equalities** - A Full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been completed (2019) which found the impact to be positive. The impact of the Autism Assessment service will be included in a refreshed Impact Assessment once further embedded into practice and aligned to a review of the wider Autism Strategy as detailed in section 3.8.
- 4.2. **Fairer Scotland Duty** - The Autism Strategy and Action Plan is aligned with other strategic documents and their vision, such as the ACHSCP Strategic Plan and the Community Planning Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan, to improve outcomes for autistic people in Aberdeen. The specific actions identified in the action plan seek to reduce inequalities and strengthen meaningful involvement of people in this process by co-producing solutions and measuring success.
- 4.3. **Financial** - There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.
- 4.4. **Workforce** - There are no direct workforce implications arising from the recommendations of this report.
- 4.5. **Legal** - There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. Links to ACHSCP Strategic Plan

- 5.1. The recommendations in this report complement the strategic priorities outlined in the Partnership's Strategic Plan primarily by supporting the



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development of person-centred approaches to care and support and by enabling supported individuals to strengthen their connection and contribution to their local community.

6. Management of Risk

6.1. Identified risks(s)

Failure to implement the Strategy and Action Plan.

This risk is minimal due to the ongoing engagement with partners. Failure to implement the Strategy and Action Plan could lead to reputational damage, to mitigate this the Autism Strategy Implementation Group has been established and reports to relevant operational and governance structures.


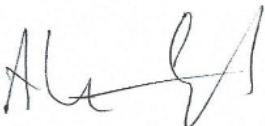
6.2. Link to risks on strategic or operational risk register:

(8) There is a risk of reputational damage to the IJB and its partner organisations resulting from complexity of function, delegation and delivery of services across health and social care.

6.3. How might the content of this report impact or mitigate these risks:

The content of this report seeks to mitigate the known risks by recommending a decision which supports the reputation of the IJB & Partnership, the implementation of the Autism Strategy and Action Plan promotes person centred approaches to care and support and the strengthening of community connections.

The risk is Low.

Approvals	
	Sandra Macleod (Chief Officer)
	Alex Stephen (Chief Finance Officer)