

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Operational Delivery Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 January 2019
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Autism Strategy and Action Plan
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	HSCP.18.105
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Rob Polkinghorne Chief Operating Officer
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Graeme Simpson Chief Officer Integrated Children's and Family Service
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Jenny Rae Strategic Development Officer Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	7.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the revised Autism strategy and action plan (appendix a) for Aberdeen City.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approve the Autism Strategy and Action Plan, which will take effect from 1 April 2019; and
- 2.2 Note the Autism Strategy and Action Plan has been approved by Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board, in December 2018; and
- 2.3 Note that progress reports on implementation will be provided to the Operational Delivery Committee annually.

### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The decision to revise the current Autism strategy and action plan was taken to ensure its strategic alignment within the context of health and social care

and educational developments locally; and to ensure the local strategy was cognisant of national changes.

- 3.2 The process of revision has been directed and led by the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) along with key partners including Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian, the Third Sector and autistic people and their families. A Strategic Steering Group has been established comprising representatives of these stakeholders. The group has undertaken a series of engagement and formal consultation activities (appendix b) which have strongly influenced and informed the revised strategy and action plan content.
- 3.3 Autism is neither a Learning Disability or a Mental Health condition which is one of the reasons why there was a lack of progress in the delivery of the previous Autism Strategy. Autism has now been defined as a service area within the ACHSCP structure by the Chief Officer. As it is clearly an area of interest for the ACHSCP given the needs of the autistic population in Aberdeen. Autism is already recognised as an area of interest for the Council, primarily through the delivery of Integrated Children's and Family Services, namely Education and Social Work provision.
- 3.4 The lack of an integrated assessment and diagnostic pathway for adults in relation to Autism is a source of concern for many people in Aberdeen who feel they would benefit from such an approach being available to them. This issue is not unique to Aberdeen City, with other areas also facing this issue. Work has already commenced, supported by the Autism Policy Team at Scottish Government, to bring together Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and NHS Grampian in the development of a truly integrated assessment and diagnostic approach. Additionally, financial resources have been secured from the Scottish Government to support such work to be developed and tested. This partnership approach to delivery of such a core service will result in improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The action plan associated with the Autism strategy identifies where and how resources are to be aligned.
- 4.2 The provision of an assessment and diagnostic service and any associated service requirements or packages following this will be the most relevant resource concern, with this responsibility aligned to the ACHSCP.
- 4.3 Work has commenced with the Autism Policy Team at the Scottish Government to address the issue of lack of assessment and diagnosis pathway, in conjunction with Aberdeenshire HSCP. External financial resource will be provided by Scottish Government for this purpose on a match funding basis. Up to £400,000 will be provided from 2019-2021, aligning with the lifespan of the current national strategy. Work to identify funding as part

of the matching process has begun and will include existing resource that is being used.

- 4.4 Currently as no pathway exists autistic adults are often aligned to either Learning Disability or Mental Health services, however for social care support the current operational eligibility criteria prevents them from being eligible for support because they do not have an associated Learning Disability or Mental Health condition. There is evidence of resource being used within these services to prevent a person entering crisis which may include admission to hospital or use of other statutory services such as the Criminal Justice System. It is this type resource that we will seek to align under any match funding requirements.
- 4.5 The costs of Autism to Scotland as a whole have been identified through recently published research (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/microsegmentation-autism-spectrum/>). This research supports the ethos that providing supports at an earlier stage and at a lower cost can reduce ongoing costs and have positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of autistic people.
- 4.6 It is envisaged that to successfully operate an assessment and diagnostic service for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire a staff resource equivalent to 3 x FTE Care Manager at G13 would be required, equates to £142,300 per year. This funding would require to be in place for up to 3 years to develop, test, implement and evaluate the pathway. After such time funding levels would be reviewed and hopefully reduced as demand for assessments reduces.
- 4.7 Full scoping of the staffing requirements for an assessment and diagnostic service will now be developed following the match funding offer from Scottish Government. This will also clarify how existing resources will be used to provide the complement of this match funding. Also looking to examples of good practice to inform any local developments.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
<b>Financial</b>	N/A		
<b>Legal</b>	N/A		
<b>Employee</b>	N/A		

<b>Customer</b>	N/A		
<b>Environment</b>	N/A		
<b>Technology</b>	N/A		
<b>Reputational</b>	Failure to approve the revised strategy and action plan has the potential likelihood to end in complaints and challenge, with a risk of reputational damage.	Medium	<p>A robust approach to the revision of the strategy and action plan has been taken, including building relationships with stakeholders through engagement and consultation</p> <p>The action plan will be implemented, monitored and progress reported on via the Autism Strategy Implementation Group to relevant governance structures.</p>

## 7. OUTCOMES

<b>Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Prosperous People</b>	This report outlines the approach to be taken across Aberdeen City for Autism. It shows a particular alignment with improving the health and wellbeing of the local population, promoting their independence and keeping them safe from harm.

<b>Design Principles of Target Operating Model</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Governance</b>	This report provides information pertaining to the governance of the Autism strategy and action plan
<b>Partnerships and Alliances</b>	This report reflects the value of partnership working in the delivery of improved outcomes and wellbeing for Autistic people in Aberdeen City.

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
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<b>Equality &amp; Human Rights Impact Assessment</b>	Full EHRIA completed
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not Required
<b>Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty</b>	Not Applicable

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

HSCP.18.105 Autism Strategy Report – reported to Integration Joint Board on 11 December 2018

## **10. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

Appendix a – Aberdeen City Autism strategy and action plan

Appendix b – Autism Strategy consultation review

Appendix c – IJB Minute – Autism Strategy

Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment – Autism Strategy and Action Plan

## **11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

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