

## READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	14 July 2023
<b>Title</b>	Autism Strategy: Year 1 Action Plan update
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note the report for information
<b>Report author</b>	Sunny Mehmi
<b>Job title</b>	Assistant Director: Adult Social Care
<b>Organisation</b>	Reading Borough Council
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the report

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Health and Well-Being Board of the progress of the Year 1 (2022/23) All Age Autism Strategy Action Plan across Reading.

### 2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The Autism Act 2009 set out the requirements for local authorities and NHS bodies to work with local partners to improve services and support autistic people. The Act put a duty on Government to produce and regularly review an 'Autism Strategy' to meet the needs of children, young people and adults with autism in England. The latest Autism Strategy was published in July 2021: 'The national strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026. Reading's strategy and action plan enables us to align the national priorities with local demands and needs of residents in Reading with autism.
- 2.2. The Reading All Age Autism Strategy was agreed at the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023. It was agreed at that Board that regular updates on the progress of the action plan would be presented back to the Board.
- 2.3. Public and partner engagement was a core element of developing Reading's Autism All Age Strategy (2022-2026), including autistic people and their families and carers, third sector and voluntary organisations and professionals from across Reading. Engagement and coproduction took place via interviews, workshops, surveys, forums, existing local groups, targeted outreach to groups and feedback sessions. This insight was used to inform and shape the strategy and its action plan, and to test emerging findings, recommendations, priorities, and vision development.
- 2.4. As a result of the engagement and feedback **Seven** priorities were developed:
1. Improving awareness, understanding and acceptance of autism
  2. Improving support and access to early years, education and supporting positive transitions and preparing for adulthood
  3. Increasing employment, vocational and training opportunities autistic people
  4. Better lives for autistic people – tackling health and care inequalities and building the right support in the community and supporting people in inpatient care
  5. Housing and supporting independent living
  6. Keeping safe and the criminal justice system
  7. Supporting families and carers of autistic people

### **3. The Proposal**

- 3.1. Appendix 2 outlines the progress Partner agencies have made in delivering Year 1 of the All Age Autism Strategy. Some of the key developments include:

#### **Autism Training**

- Oliver McGowen training, provided by a Skills for Care (as an endorsed provider) is now mandatory for care staff.
- Autism Awareness is also available to all RBC care providers
- Autism Berkshire completed a ½ day training to Primary Care Social Prescribers.
- Autism Berkshire were able to obtain a popup shop in the Oracle Shopping centre and raise awareness and signpost to local services.

#### **Early Years Support**

- Where appropriate the Early Years SEND Advisors/Portage Workers will facilitate and support transition planning, joining multi professional meetings, empowering parents/carers to liaise with the SEND team regarding transition concerns.
- There has been two new SCD early years resource bases created to support early intervention for children with Social Communication needs who are able to access a mainstream curriculum; with the ambition for children to make good steady progress and transition into a mainstream school.
- Transitions has become a focus in Early Years newsletters and networks with a reminder that transitions is not a one off event but a process across the year that settings can work with their local schools together to improve support in transitions.

#### **Employment Support**

- Elevate continue in delivering careers information, advice, and guidance from the Youth Hub at the Curious Lounge. The hub was established in partnership with the DWP, for young people 16-25 with complex needs, including SEND young people.
- Elevate are currently building the links with employers and advocating for young people who need additional support in the work place.
- Elevate are currently working with the SEND Team at BFfC to set up Reading's first SEND employment forum with the aim to increase the number of local employers who are able to provide work placements to SEND young people including work placements and supported internships.
- Elevate is currently working with the Apprenticeships Team at RBC and Team Reading (HR at RBC) to start developing the offer to SEND young people that also include supported internships.

#### **Healthcare Support**

- BOB ICB Berkshire West, have co-produced letters with Children and Young People and the Parent Carer Forum to send to GP's requesting an Annual Health Check. GP training has taken place to raise awareness of the Annual Health Check with the LD champions.
- BOB ICB are currently undertaking a Quality Improvement piece of work reviewing the wait times for autism.
- BOB ICB Berkshire West Place continue to work with the Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust to improve experience of care for CYP and families. RBHFT have mapped out the 10 transition pathways and the parent carer forums are involved with the transitions steering group
- The Positive Behaviour Service is in place to offer training to education, social care, the voluntary sector, health and parent and carers.

#### **Supported Living Accommodation**

- Commissioning have identified that there are potentially some gaps in current services which they will be begin work to address. These gaps include short-term supported living accommodation for:
  - Assessment on hospital discharge

- Step down options to support independence and demonstrate ability to manage a tenancy
- Locked door accommodation

### **Criminal Justice Support**

- Autism Alert cards are now distributed to all Reading Police Stations
- Autism Berkshire has a rolling programme of training with the Thames Valley Police.
- There are proactive links with the National Police Autism Association and the Force Autism Support lead.
- Autism Berkshire are now supporting the Thames Valley Police Neurodiversity Support Network.

### **Carers and Family Support**

- Family Workers are aware of the Autism Advisor support and regularly 'refer' families. They are also aware of other local autism support services and will signpost families to these as appropriate.
- The Autism Advisor Service offers consultations to family workers in order to support their work with families of autistic young people.
- Autism Advisor continues to be copied into all CAMHS reports and offers all families a home visit or virtual meeting.
- New Carers Partnership has now been commissioned to provide a more timely service for carers assessment and support.

3.2. The Autism Board will continue to give annual report to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **4. Contribution to Reading's Health and Wellbeing Strategic Aims**

4.1 The formation of the Autism Partnership Board, the Strategy and Action Plan alongside key partners across the Health, Educational and Voluntary sector ensure that Strategic Aims set out in the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy are met:

1. Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people
2. Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives
3. Help children and families in early years
4. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
5. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

4.1 Furthermore the following ambitions are realised through the work plan of the Board, All age Autism Strategy and its Action Plan.

- To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all
- Contributions to Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing of children, young people and adults with autism.

## **5. Environmental and Climate Implications**

5.1. There is no environmental or climate implications arising from this report.

## **6. Community Engagement**

6.1. Since the developed on the Autism Strategy and Action Plan throughout 2022, no further consultation has taken place. However ongoing partnership work to deliver the strategy and its action plan continues.

## **7. Equality Implications**

7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed as part of the development of the Autism Strategy and Action Plan for the January 2023, this has been reviewed and no amendments required.

## **8. Other Relevant Considerations**

8.1. Not applicable.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1 There are no duties for the Local Authority regarding the Autism Board however there is a requirement to carry out / implement the Autism Strategy which was published in July 2021: 'The national strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026 on a local level. The Local Authority also need to consider the needs of children, young people and adults as part of our legal duties under the Care and Families Act 2014 and Care Act 2014.

9.2 Under the Section 1 and 4 of the Care Act the Local Authority has a duty to 'Promote individual well-being' and 'Provide Information and Advice. We have a responsibility under Section 9 to 'Assess an adult care and support needs' and under section 18 a 'Duty to meet the care and support needs'.

## **10. Financial Implications**

10.1. There are currently no significant budget implications regarding the implementation for the Strategy and Action Plan. The delivery of the Action Plan would be within existing resources and reviewing existing pathways to meet the needs of residents. The care and support needs of children and young people and adults who require social care are met as per our legal duties.

## **11. Timetable for Implementation**

11.1. Not applicable.

## **12. Background Papers**

12.1. There are none.

## **Appendices**

1. All Age Autism Strategy for Reading 2022 to 2026
2. All Age Autism Strategy Action Plan 2022/23
3. The Equality Impact Assessment