



CABINET

Subject Heading:

All Age Autsim Strategy

Cabinet Member:

Councillor Gillian Ford

Councillor Oscar Ford

SLT Lead:

Barbara Nicholls / Robert South

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

State briefly how the decision relates to the relevant policies of the Council

Financial summary:

There are no financial implications

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

(c) Significant effect on two or more Wards

When should this matter be reviewed?

The action plan will be subjected to an annual review and a progress report to be published.

Reviewing OSC:

State the OSC (or OSCs) that will be responsible for reviewing the decision if called-in or once implemented

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering

[X]

Places making Havering

[X]

Opportunities making Havering

[X]

Connections making Havering

[X]

SUMMARY

This report summaries the findings from the public consultation of the all-age autism strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The cabinet is recommended to:

1. Review the changes made to the all age autism strategy as a result of the public consultation
2. Approval of the publication of the final all-age autism strategy.

REPORT DETAIL

1. The Consultation

The consultation was developed on Havering's digital consultation platform; Havering Citizen Space and was open from 3rd July 2019 – 16th September 2019. The following questions were developed on Citizen Space which allowed members of the public to comment on the draft strategy.

- *Are the priorities identified in the strategy relevant and if not what should be added/amended?*
- *Are the actions set out in the action plan appropriate and if not what additions /amendments*
- *Are there any additional areas that should be included within the Strategy and if so what?*
- *Is having an all-age strategy the most effective way to achieve the vision set out in this strategy? Please provide any alternative suggestions.*
- *Should this strategy apply to everyone with autism, including people with a learning disability? If not what alternative suggestions do you have?*
- *What is the best way to make sure that the strategy is implemented? Do you think that the Partnership Board can do this effectively?*
- *Are there any other comments that you would wish to make on the Draft Strategy not covered by your responses above?*

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Easy read versions of the strategy and the action plan were produced by Sycamore Trust and used throughout the consultation.

A communication plan/strategy was developed outlining the key stakeholders and business partners. An email was developed which provided the purpose/background to the strategy and a direct link to the consultation was disseminated to the following partners/stakeholders;

People and Families	Partners
In Receipt of services	Culture and Leisure - Gerri Scott
In Education / Employment Setting which currently support users	Housing-
Barking & Dagenham College	Employment Agencies- Havering Works
Havering 6th Form College	Education - Trevor Cook
Havering College	Community Safety - Diane Egan
National Star College	Police- Diane Weeler
NCC Redbridge	Transport - Passenger Travel Service
NCC Tower Hamlets/St Johns	Workforce Development-
Oakwood Court College	Social Care Academy- Kate Dempsey
Priors Court	Emergency Duty Team- Redbridge Anna Poltark / Waltham Forest/Barking and Dagenham
St Elizabeth's College	Havering Sports - Darrell Braiden
St Johns - Brighton	Youth Offending Service- Gary Jones
Treloar's	Havering Living Magazine-
Cambian Lufton College	
Havering Adult College	
JFK School	ASC Operational Staff
South Essex	Adults
RAGS	Children's
Myplace	Commissioning
HAD- Havering Adults with Dis	Business Units
Sycamore Trust	
Avelon Centre	Strategic
DABD	CCG
FIG	SLT
Help not Hospital	BHRUT
Rose Project - Avelon	NELFT
Havering Imago	
Extra Care	Health Acute / Community
Age UK	NELFT
Health Watch	CCG
Advocacy for All	CAMHS
Heather Court	BHRUT
Great Charter Close	

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Peabody	VSO
Havering LD Supported Accommodation Service	Specific to this group
Havering MIND	Wider support to Adults / Young People / Carers
Corbets Tey	
Ravensbourne	
Carers Hub	
Positive Parents	
Shared Lives	
Neave Crescent	
6 Peel Way	
Reapton Drive	
Providers OOB	
Residential Placements	
Placements	
Sapphire Leisure Centre	
Access Able	
Active Homecare Providers	
Wider Community	

In addition to the stakeholders identified above, the consultation was published in **Havering Living Magazine, Local Offer, Schools Portal (before and after school summer holidays)**. Letters were produced and distributed to all children on the school transport service. Special schools and Mainstream schools were informed of the consultation and encouraged to publish this in their newsletters. An email notification was sent to all the carers registered with the Carers Hub.

A poster (**Appendix A**) was designed to attract the attention of members of the public; these posters were distributed to the following venues; The Autism Hub, Sapphire Leisure Centre, Jacks Café, and Vue Cinema.

Havering's social media platforms were also utilised and the posters were circulated regularly during the consultation period.

Due to the nature of the strategy, we needed to hold workshops with parents and carers to ensure everyone was allowed to provide their feedback on the draft strategy. We held two events;

Positive Parents

A workshop was held with Positive Parents on Wednesday 17th July 2019 at First Step. The workshop consisted of a presentation (**Appendix B**) and the specific consultation questions were discussed. 12 parent/carers attended the event and voiced their concerns regarding autism in Havering generally. It was clear that the

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majority of the parents/carers agreed that there is a lack of understanding of autism in mainstream Havering schools. Members of Positive Parents also voiced their concerns on the following areas;

- Lack of short breaks provisions
- Support for families following diagnosis
- Lack of empathy from health care professionals
- Lack of autism awareness training provided in mainstream schools, GPs.

A copy of their responses has been provided in **Appendix C**. During the event, it was fed-back that consultation events should be less formal, for example; parents would prefer table discussions with commissioners, instead of formal presentations.

Overall, the members of this group had little confidence in the Local Authority achieving any of the actions outlined in the plan; they acknowledged the ambition of the strategy and hoped funding would be made available to achieve these plans.

Parent Group – Sycamore Trust

Following on from the feedback provided at the workshop held at Positive Parents. An informal discussion took place with the parents at the parent group held at The Autism Hub with Sycamore Trust on Friday 13th September 2019. Four parents and The Hub manager were present and although parent numbers attending were low, their views were valuable. Parents echoed the views collected from the previous event.

One mother told us the difficulties she has experienced with the teachers and staff within her child's mainstream school. The mother felt this was mainly due to the lack of understanding and autism awareness training that is provided in mainstream schools.

The parents present used the opportunity to provide personal experiences on the diagnostic pathway and the struggles to get a diagnosis for their child, which led to further issues when applying for Education Health and Care Plans.

Havering Young Advisors

Havering Young Advisors (YAH) is a group of young people aged 12-25, who live in the borough and have a disability. The group researches to find out what young people with disabilities think about their lives; they do this using various techniques such as questionnaires and group discussions, which can help the local authority in shaping future services.

The YAH has provided a report, (**Appendix D**) that outlines the key findings concerning both the all-age autism and learning disabilities strategies. They created a range of accessible, large format/ pictorial, easy read, and fun questionnaires to obtain views from young people in Havering ranging from ages 12-25 and targeted the following groups:

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- Schools
 - Forest School Academy formerly known as Dycorts School
 - Corbets Tey

- Havering College
 - Ardleigh Green
 - Quarles Campus
 - Rainham Campus

- Positive Parents
- Havering Association for People with Disabilities (HAD)
- Havering Association for the Support of People with Learning Disabilities and their Carers (HAVCARE)
- Havering Disabled Sports Association
- Romford Autistic Group Support (RAGS)
- St Peter's Church
- Havering Museum
- Havering Library
- Autism Hub
- BHR Hospitals NHS Trust
- Dance and Drama Classes
- Friends
- Families/Relatives

125 hard copies of the questionnaires were sent and 96 responses were received. 23 of the responses could not be included because the returned documents were difficult to understand.

2. Analysis

Citizen Space Analysis

34 responses were received through Citizen Space and the majority of these responses were completed by a relative or a friend of the person receiving care. A breakdown has been in Appendix A

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

The draft all-age autism strategy was consulted on in 2018, due to COVID-19 the Joint Commissioning Unit was required to undertake the role of PECC (Provider Emergency Command Centre). As a result, all projects were placed on hold, including the finalisation of the strategy.

The National All Age Autism strategy has now been published, this has been reviewed and the following service areas have been added to the local strategy; Youth Justice System.

We have considered the consultation responses and made significant changes to the action plan, updated areas that are no longer in service, or programmes which have ended. The strategy is now in its final version and we are seeking approval to publish, taking the implementation approach outlined below:

I. Implementation approach

Following the finalisation of the strategy, the strategy should be implemented in two stages;

Stage 1:

Implement the action plan with resources currently available.

Stage 2:

To identify the actions from the plan that are new initiatives and require funding. These will then be developed accordingly.

II. Launch Event

The final recommendation is to host a 'Launch Event' for the final strategy. This event aims to allow residents of Havering to have the opportunity to communicate with those that are responsible for accomplishing the strategy.

Other options considered:

Consult on the changes made to the strategy, this option was explored by the Autism Partnership Board, however, it was rejected as the publication of this strategy has already experienced a significant delay due to COVID-19 impact.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are two stages of implementing the All Age Autism strategy and a number of partners involved. Each partner manages its own financial implications. The first stage, covered by this paper, does not have any financial implications for any of the partners, including LB of Havering. There will be no change to the level of provision due to this paper.

It is envisaged there will be financial implications due to stage two of implementing the strategy, which will be presented via a different paper.

Legal implications and risks:

The Local Authority has various duties under the Children Act 1989, Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014 and the Autism Act 2009 in relation to people with autism. There is no specific duty to have a local Autism strategy. However, there is a national Adult Autism Strategy and the Government has issued guidance, "Statutory guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy"

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422338/autism-guidance.pdf

The implementation of a local Autism Strategy appears to be consistent with the legislation and guidance.

Whenever a Local Authority consults on a matter it must do so meaningfully which means that it must consult at a time when proposals are in the formative stage, it must give sufficient time and information to consultees and must conscientiously take the results of the consultation into account before making any final decisions.

The results of the consultation are set out in the appendices and Cabinet must pay careful attention to this before making any final decisions. Whilst it is not clear what changes have been made to the draft Strategy during the consultation process Cabinet must consider whether any further changes are necessary in the light of the consultees comments.

Implementation of the strategy may engage some statutory duties and legal advice will be available to the Local Authority as and when the need arises.

Human Resources implications and risks:

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex/gender, and sexual orientation.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

- **An individual's behaviour and lifestyle such as smoking, diet, exercise, alcohol consumption, or self-care**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Mental health and wellbeing**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Access to and quality of education or other training opportunities**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Employment, income, opportunities for economic development**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Access to green space, sports facilities, and opportunities to be active**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Quality availability and affordability of homes and housing,**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Opportunity to interact socially with other people, social isolation, community support networks and being able to live independently**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Ability to access health and social care services**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

- **Transport, and connections to places within or between the Borough**

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

Postive impact – dedicated support from partners identified in the action plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There is a statutory obligation to list papers relied on in the preparation of the report, unless:

- 1 It is an exempt report***
- 2 Papers relied upon are already in the public domain as “published papers”. This can include: books, magazines and newspapers; Government publications; Council publications (including previous reports and minutes of meetings)***

If in doubt, please seek advice from Committee Administration