

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Extension of the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub
Lead officer:	Sophie Barron Commissioner & Project Manager Joint Commissioning Unit Adult Services
Approved by:	Barbara Nicholls – Strategic Director of People
Version Number	V5
Date and Key Changes Made	24 th October (v1), 25 th October (v2), 8 th November (v3), 22 nd November (v4), 29 th November (v5)
Scheduled date for next review:	April 2024 to coincide with the development of the new service model and recommissioning ahead of the proposed new contract end date of 31 st July 2024.

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team? Please note that the Corporate Policy & Diversity and Public Health teams require at least 5 working days to provide advice on EqHIAs.	Yes
Did you seek advice from the Public Health team?	Yes
Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website? See Publishing Checklist.	No

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

About your activity

1	Title of activity	Extension of the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub		
2	Type of activity	Extension of a contract		
3	Scope of activity	<p>The contract for the provision of peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub is due to lapse when the current contract ends on the 31st January 2024. The recommendation is to extend the contract for an additional 6 months to enable further time to undertake a detailed review of services and carry out a period of engagement with the intention of recommissioning a new all age service offer.</p> <p>This EqHIA has been carried out to gather a detailed understanding of the potential effects on our autistic community on extending this contract, and will be further refined over the coming months as part of the redesign.</p>		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	No	If the answer to <u>either</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people from different backgrounds?	No		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes	<p><i>Please use the Screening tool before you answer this question.</i></p> <p>If you answer 'YES', please continue to question 5.</p>	
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	N/A		

Completed by:	Sophie Barron – Commissioner and Project Manager
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Date:

29th November 2023

2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:

Havering currently commissions the Sycamore Trust to deliver a preventative offer for adults with Autism and related conditions, within a budget of £80,000.00 per annum. The current contract ends on the 31st January 2024.

The Sycamore Trust has delivered this non-statutory contract since 2018. In 2021 a procurement exercise was completed but the procurement cycle failed due to no suitable bids being received. As a result of this an extension was given to the Sycamore Trust as an interim measure.

Background of the contract

The current contract provides peer support activities for adults with Autism and related conditions. This includes providing information and 1-1 outreach support for those socially isolated and raising awareness of Autism in the local community. The service is structured into a combination of advice/signposting and peer support groups which are run from a hub in central Romford and serve those between the ages of 18-30. The contract outcomes are to prevent and/or reduce demand for statutory services for Autism and other related conditions.

Current service aims are as follows:

- Provide a place for people with autism/learning disabilities to come for support, social interaction and to develop new skills
- Provide useful information advice on a range of issues affecting autistic people in Havering and act as a source of information on everything from employment to benefits
- To involve service users and carers in the design and planning of services
- To support users of the service to manage their autism/learning disability without the need/reduce the level of statutory support
- To support users of the service who are not in education employment or training to achieve positive economic outcomes
- To promote independent living and support self-management
- To raise awareness of adult autism within the broader community in order to ensure autism-friendly communities, employers and opportunities

Planning

The council sought to work with NHS partners to secure additional funding to expand the service to an all-age offering to coincide with our recently launched 'All Age Autism Strategy'. Currently Havering has a higher proportion of children aged 0-17 (22.3%) than 80% of local authorities in England and demand for autism related services for Children and parents has been in demand as a result. Unfortunately, after applying for several

funding applications, this has not been possible with the current budget pressures impacting Havering and our Health partners.

With the launch of the all-age strategy and the development and expansion of NELFT's ASD pathways earlier this year, the current service specification is no longer fit for purpose. NELFT currently offer pre-diagnosis support in the form of signposting and advice. Those awaiting assessment also have access to a monthly virtual pre-diagnostic group, a 5-week rolling programme covering various themes each month. They are planning to launch a post-diagnosis offer in January 2024, which coincides with the end of Sycamore Trust's contract. This offer will include user-led peer support groups, drop-in sessions and training to support service users, carers and parents to best support those with autism.

It is important to note that NELFT's business case for this service stipulates that the post-diagnostic offer will be available to those recently diagnosed with autism which excludes our existing autism community. However, there are a number of peer support and social inclusion groups available in Havering that are inclusive and are able to support this cohort such as:

- Havering Association for Disabilities (HAD)
- Bridge of Friends Group
- Romford Autistic Group (RAGS)
- Havering MIND

In addition to these similar services being on offer, we are also aware that there is a demand for support for parents of children with autism and peer support for those over 30, which is not included within the service offer.

There have also been some service delivery-related issues with the current contract, i.e. low numbers of new referrals vs. what is coming through the diagnostic pathways and a large spend of the contract value on rental costs.

Although the initial decision to let the contract lapse at its end date of 31st January was made in October, it is clear from correspondence with the community that a further detailed review of services needs to take place alongside a period of engagement. It is the Council's intention to use this information to help determine and shape a service that meets the current needs of our autistic community and align with the priorities in the All Age Autism Strategy. In the interest of ensuring continuity of service, it is recommended that the contract is extended for a period of 6 months to carry out this work.

Who will be affected by the activity?

The proposal to extend the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub at its end date does not have the potential to affect and impact our autistic community due to ensuring continuity of the service.

Our autistic community

It is important to note that the way in which people with autism manage their lives differs from person to person, therefore it would be unrealistic to expect that any Borough would

know the exact figures of those on the spectrum. Some people on the autism spectrum do not wish it to be known that they have autism; others consider that it impacts on them enough to seek out any specialist help or support; and others develop their own coping mechanisms to get through life.

Prevalence rates

The following table, from the Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI) indicates the predicted numbers of adults aged 18+ who have autism in Havering and indicates an expected increase in numbers in coming years; (this table includes people with learning disability).

	2020	2025	2030	2035
People aged 18-24 predicted to have autistic spectrum disorders	195	193	219	231
People aged 25-34 predicted to have autistic spectrum disorders	351	344	328	338
People aged 35-44 predicted to have autistic spectrum disorders	343	385	390	379
People aged 45-54 predicted to have autistic spectrum disorders	321	323	357	389
People aged 55-64 predicted to have autistic spectrum disorders	309	316	310	316
People aged 65-74 predicted to have autistic spectrum disorders	227	234	260	271
People aged 75 and over predicted to have autistic spectrum disorders	192	217	229	252
Total population aged 18 +	1,938	2,012	2,093	2,176

These prevalence rates indicate a current average of 1,982 adults with Autism in Havering.

Current service provision in Havering

The following tables provide data for those service users that use the Autism Hub as well as the numbers currently coming through NELFT's diagnostic pathway. We also have access to prevalence rates (as above) to give us a better understanding as to the potential size of our residents with Autism both now and in the future.

Current service figures

Service	Dates	New Referrals	Total no. accessing the service
Sycamore Trust	October-December 2022	7	57
Sycamore Trust	January-March 2023	14	57
Sycamore Trust	April-June 2023	12	63

Current NELFT figures

Service	Dates	Referrals
NELFT Adults Autism Diagnostic Pathway (Havering Data)	October-December 2022	38 referrals and 94 assessment appointments offered
NELFT Adults Autism Diagnostic Pathway (Havering Data)	January-March 2023	41 referrals and 115 assessment appointments offered
NELFT Adults Autism Diagnostic Pathway (Havering Data)	April-June 2023	43 referrals and 98 appointments offered

For the period April-June 2023, there has been a total of 63 residents that have received support from the Sycamore Trust and 141 Havering residents who have approached/offered an assessment via NELFT's ASD pathway. As of June 2023, there were 187 Havering adults awaiting an Autism Assessment.

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact:

Extending the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub will have a neutral impact on those aged 18+. Although when considered against all age groups it is assessed that it may have a negative impact on children under 18 as the current service is commissioned for Adults only. As commissioned (for adults), overall it is assessed that the impact is neutral.

Evidence:

Of the service users referred between April – June 2023, 58% were aged between 18-25, 16% were aged between 26-34 and 25% were aged between 35-44.

The PANSI prevalence rates show that there are an estimated 1,982 autistic adults currently living in Havering with a minimum of 889 being between the ages of 18-44. Although it is not expected that every Adult with Autism would need support from the Autism Hub, current statistics show that they are currently supporting 3.1% of the autistic 18+ community.

It is important to note that currently Havering has a higher proportion of children aged 0-17 (22.3%) than 80% of local authorities in England. Demand for autism related services for Children and parents has been increasing and is not included within the current service offer.

Sources used:

- *Provider’s performance data*
- *Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI) prevalence rates*
- *Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census 2021*

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical, mental, sensory, progressive conditions and learning difficulties. Also consider neurodivergent conditions e.g. dyslexia and autism.

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall impact:

Extending the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub will have a neutral impact on the current users due to ensuring continuity of the service.

Evidence:

The Autism Hub targets support at those with autism or a learning disability who are either receiving no or little existing support. Of the service users referred between April –June 2023, 100% had a diagnosis of Autism and no other support needs were identified. Of the predicted number of adults with Autism, the Autism Hub is currently supporting 3.1%.

The needs of people with both learning disability and autism who meet Care Act eligibility criteria are met via the learning disability team. For other adults with autism, if they meet the current eligibility criteria for social care their needs may be met through one of the locality teams, the mental health teams or hospital based services.

For those autistic adults known to Adult Social Care in 2022/23, 196 have a recorded health condition of autism and 50 are receiving services. Those with additional needs are mostly likely to be known to Adult Social Care, in which 95 are in receipt of services for Autism and a learning disability.

Extending the contract will ensure that autistic Adults who do not fall under the Care Act or Mental Health eligibility will have access to peer support and social inclusion activities to support them in the community.

Sources used:

- *Provider’s performance data*
- *Adult Social Care data*

Protected Characteristic – Sex / gender: Consider both men and women	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall impact: <i>The extension of the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through of the Autism Hub will have a neutral impact as the extension of the service does not impact adversely on either gender.</i>	
Evidence: <i>Of the service users referred between April –June 2023, 50% were male and 50% were female. Therefore, there is a Neutral impact and no negative impacts have been identified.</i>	
Sources used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Provider’s performance data</i> 	

Protected Characteristic – Ethnicity / race / nationalities: Consider the impact on different minority ethnic groups and nationalities	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall impact: <i>We do capture this information via regular performance monitoring meetings however the cohort is small enough to identify individuals so has therefore has not been included.</i>	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Protected Characteristic – Religion / faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs, including those with no religion or belief	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall impact: <i>The extension of the contract that provides peer support and social</i>	

Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>inclusion through the Autism Hub will have a neutral impact as the extension of the service does not impact adversely on any religion/faith.</i>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence:		
<i>Of the service users referred between April –June 2023, 16.6% identified as Christian, 41.6% identified as no religion and another 41.6% preferred not to say. Therefore, it is assessed there is a Neutral impact and no negative impacts have been identified.</i>		
Sources used:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Provider's performance data</i> 		

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: <i>We do capture this information via regular performance monitoring meetings however the cohort is small enough to identify individuals so has therefore has not been included.</i>
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence:		
Sources used:		

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: <i>There is no information available to make an assessment on the impact of the extension of the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub on this protected characteristic.</i>
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence:		

Sources used:

Protected Characteristic – Marriage / civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
Positive	<i>We do capture this information via regular performance monitoring meetings however the cohort is small enough to identify individuals so has therefore has not been included.</i>
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are taking maternity or paternity leave	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
Positive	<i>There is no information available to make an assessment on the impact of the extension of the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub on this protected characteristic.</i>
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: <i>There is no information available to make an assessment on the impact of the extension of the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub on this protected characteristic.</i>
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity?	
<i>Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: <i>It was initially assessed as 'Negative' following feedback from people who use the service</i> <i>Extending the contract that provides peer support and social inclusion through the Autism Hub will have a positive impact on the current users of the service as they will continue to receive support to improve their wellbeing, quality of life, social contact and how to better manage their daily lives.</i>
Neutral	
Negative	
Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box <p style="text-align: right;">Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
Evidence:	
<p><i>Of the service users who completed a survey between April –September 2023, 50% strongly agreed that they have had an improved quality of life, 62% strongly agreed that their social inclusion and social contact had increased and 31% strongly agreed that they are better able to manage their daily lives.</i></p> <p><i>As identified in the tool below, the following areas are delivered as part of the current contract:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Life skills</i> • <i>Social contact</i> • <i>Social support</i> • <i>Participation in the community</i> 	

- *Membership of community groups*
- *Reputation of community*

Extending the contract will ensure that autistic Adults will continue to be supported with their wellbeing through peer support and social inclusion activities with the aim of preventing statutory support.

Sources used:

- *Provider's performance data*

3. Health & Wellbeing Screening Tool

Will the activity / service / policy / procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below

The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.

Lifestyle YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Personal circumstances YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Access to services/facilities/amenities YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Diet <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise and physical activity <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to passive smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol intake <input type="checkbox"/> Dependency on prescription drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Illicit drug and substance use <input type="checkbox"/> Risky Sexual behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure and cohesion of family unit <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting <input type="checkbox"/> Childhood development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Life skills <input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety <input type="checkbox"/> Employment status <input type="checkbox"/> Working conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Level of income, including benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Level of disposable income <input type="checkbox"/> Housing tenure <input type="checkbox"/> Housing conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Educational attainment <input type="checkbox"/> Skills levels including literacy and numeracy	<input type="checkbox"/> to Employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> to Workplaces <input type="checkbox"/> to Housing <input type="checkbox"/> to Shops (to supply basic needs) <input type="checkbox"/> to Community facilities <input type="checkbox"/> to Public transport <input type="checkbox"/> to Education <input type="checkbox"/> to Training and skills development <input type="checkbox"/> to Healthcare <input type="checkbox"/> to Social services <input type="checkbox"/> to Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> to Respite care <input type="checkbox"/> to Leisure and recreation services and facilities
Social Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Economic Factors YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Factors YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social contact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social support <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourliness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation in the community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Membership of community groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation of community/area <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in public affairs <input type="checkbox"/> Level of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Level of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Public safety measures <input type="checkbox"/> Road safety measures	<input type="checkbox"/> Creation of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Retention of wealth in local area/economy <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of income <input type="checkbox"/> Business activity <input type="checkbox"/> Job creation <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of education opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of education opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Technological development <input type="checkbox"/> Amount of traffic congestion	<input type="checkbox"/> Air quality <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality <input type="checkbox"/> Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour <input type="checkbox"/> Noise levels <input type="checkbox"/> Vibration <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards <input type="checkbox"/> Land use <input type="checkbox"/> Natural habitats <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape, including green and open spaces <input type="checkbox"/> Townscape, including civic areas and public realm <input type="checkbox"/> Use/consumption of natural resources <input type="checkbox"/> Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Solid waste management <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport infrastructure

4. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

✓	<p>1. The initial screening exercise showed a strong indication that there will be no impacts on people and need to carry out an EqHIA.</p> <p>2. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u></p>	→	<p>Proceed with implementation of your activity</p>
	<p>3. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs <u>to be addressed</u></p>	→	<p>COMPLETE SECTION 5: Complete action plan with measures to mitigate the and finalise the EqHIA</p>
	<p>4. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level</p>	→	<p>Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly. Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.</p>

5. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise **negative** impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will mitigate or reduce any **negative** equality and/or health & wellbeing impacts, identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; if required, will amend the scope and direction of the change; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
Health and Wellbeing	Initial assessment Negative Now assessed as Positive due to the proposal to extend the contract	To ensure continuity of the service the contract be extended for another 6 months to carry out a detailed review of service and period of engagement with the intention to commission a new all age service offer.	Extend the service for 6 months from 1 st February 2024	6 months	Sophie Barron

Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts.

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

6. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:

This EqIA will updated as the service model is developed and recommissioned ahead of the proposed new contract end date of 31st July 2024.

Scheduled date of review: no later than April 2024 in readiness for the recommissioning exercise to begin.

Lead Officer conducting the review:

Sophie Barron (Commissioner and Project Manager, Commissioning Unit)