

Report to: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 23 April 2014

Report of: Margaret Asquith, Director –
Children's and Adult Services

Report No:

Contact Officer: Rachel Tanner, Assistant Director –
Care Management and Adult Provider
Services

Tele No:

Report Title: **Bolton Autism Strategy**

Purpose:

To request HWBB approval of Bolton's Autism Strategy

Recommendations:

HWBB is requested to approve the attached Autism Strategy and receive an annual update on progress towards its implementation

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

Appendix 1 – Bolton Autism Strategy

1. Background

The national Adult Autism Strategy, *Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives*, was published in 2010 and set out the Government's long term vision for transforming the lives of and outcomes for adults with autism. The Department of Health is the lead policy department for the Strategy but with delivery shared across a range of government departments and agencies, and local health and social service providers.

The Autism Strategy has five areas for action aimed at improving the lives of adults with autism:

- increasing awareness and understanding of autism;
- developing a clear, consistent pathway for diagnosis of autism;
- improving access for adults with autism to services and support;
- helping adults with autism into work; and
- enabling local partners to develop relevant services.

The Department of Health has now released an update to the 2010 strategy; a document entitled *Think Autism*. The document recognises the progress that has been made in improving support for adults with autism in England since 2010, and confirms its support for the vision and direction of travel that the original strategy set in train.

Think Autism identifies fifteen 'Priority Challenges for Action', which have been developed by people with autism, carers, professionals, and others who work with people with autism as part of the consultation carried out for the update to the strategy.

The document introduces some other significant developments, including the announcement of the Autism Innovation Fund, supported by £4.5 million revenue and capital funding to support some of the key themes set out in the update; a forthcoming national Autism Awareness and Champions programme; and confirmation that the third Autism Self-Assessment will be issued later in 2014, along with statutory guidance for the strategy.

2. Local Autism Strategy

Bolton's draft Autism Strategy, initially developed and drafted in 2012/13, has been refreshed for 2014 in readiness for sign-off by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The original 'Priority Outcomes', which cover all of the key themes in the national strategy, have been revisited and amended to reflect progress made locally. The document has been updated where appropriate, to reflect recent national policy developments and also a number of local developments including the commissioning of the diagnostic care pathway for adults with autism and the reconstruction of Thicketford Centre to accommodate a specialist day service base for adults with learning disability, autism and complex needs.

In light of the publication of the Think Autism update, the more detailed Implementation Plan has been removed from this version of the strategy and will be developed separately and shared with partners, and used to monitor progress. The new 'Priority Challenges for Action' will be worked into the Implementation Plan under the existing Priority Outcomes.

It is proposed that the Implementation Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Disability Partnership Board and User reference group, and amendments or additional actions will be proposed at these times; and that the strategy will be fully reviewed on a three-year cycle, next in 2017. Updates on progress will be reported to Bolton's Disability Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board annually.

3. Timescale

Below is a proposed timetable for sign-off and publication of the Autism Strategy:

Date	Action
23 April 2014	Health and Wellbeing Board sign-off
June 2014	Publication of the Autism Strategy

4. Recommendations

HWBB is requested to approve the attached Autism Strategy and receive an annual update on progress towards its implementation.