
To: Social Work Health and Well-Being Policy Board

On: 3 November 2015

Report by: Chief Officer, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership

Heading: Renfrewshire Autism Strategy 2014 – 2017: Progress Update

1. Summary

- 1.1. In 2011 the Scottish Government published *The Scottish Strategy for Autism*. This national strategy set out a clear vision for individuals living with autism, underpinned by the principles of dignity, privacy, choice, safety, realising potential, and equality. It contained 26 recommendations with goals to be met over a ten-year period.
- 1.2. Following this, the Scottish Government required that all Scottish local authorities produce local autism strategies based around the national strategy. In August 2014 the Community and Family Care Policy Board agreed the *Renfrewshire Autism Strategy 2014 – 2017*, which was subsequently approved by the Scottish Government. The local Renfrewshire strategy set out 11 recommendations to improve the delivery of autism services in Renfrewshire, and also detailed the actions required to address those parts of the national strategy that are relevant to Renfrewshire.
- 1.3. An important aim of the Renfrewshire Autism Strategy was to build capacity within Renfrewshire for children and adults with autism to live full and meaningful lives through improved access to information, advice, support and services.
- 1.4. The purpose of this report is to provide an update for the Social Work, Health and Wellbeing Policy Board on the progress made on the 11 recommendations within the Renfrewshire Autism Strategy and to seek the Board's approval to develop the strategy further.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Social Work Health and Well Being Policy Board is asked to note the progress made to date in the implementation of the Renfrewshire Autism Strategy; in the improvements made to services; and in creating better opportunities for children and adults with autism across Renfrewshire.

3. Background

- 3.1. The 2014-17 Renfrewshire Autism Strategy set out eleven recommendations for the development and improvement of autism services in Renfrewshire. Details of these recommendations and the progress made against them is contained in the Autism Strategy Work Plan (see Appendix 1).
- 3.2. The first recommendation recognised that in order to take forward the strategy and build sustainable services, it would be necessary to ensure ownership of the autism agenda across all key partners in Renfrewshire. A Renfrewshire Autism Working Group (AWG) was established to progress the actions identified in the strategy. The group membership was made up of representatives from education, housing, health, social work, and other partner organisations to reflect the diverse range of issues affecting people with autism.
- 3.3. The AWG has made progress in certain key areas of the autism strategy including, for example, the development of autism services for children and adults with learning disabilities and the improvement of transition arrangements between children and adult services. Also of note is that the particular housing needs of people with autism will, for the first time, be addressed within the forthcoming Local Housing Strategy.
- 3.4. The Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership (RHSCP) and the newly established Renfrewshire Children's Services provide important opportunities for the AWG to bring together both council and health services for children and adults. These include the Children with Disabilities Team; Education (psychological services and additional support needs); Learning Disabilities; Mental Health including Children and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS); and primary care services including health visiting. All of these services already play important roles in assessing, diagnosing and supporting people with autism, and their carers, but by collaborating more closely these services should become more efficient and effective in delivering successful outcomes.
- 3.5. Improving data recording and information sharing is being viewed as essential to inform future planning. In order to make progress in this area, membership of the AWG will be extended to ensure appropriate representation from key partners in these areas.
- 3.6. It is recognised that there remains a need to engage with a wider group of stakeholders, including carers and people diagnosed with autism. It is therefore intended to hold a public event in November 2015 which will be aimed at publicising the strategy, increasing awareness of autism, and attracting wider ownership of the autism agenda.
- 3.7. The AWG will continue to explore funding and development opportunities to support this approach within Renfrewshire. An application has been made to

the Scottish Government's Autism Innovation and Improvement Fund. This bid is aimed at financing a project to improve autism information across Renfrewshire. The outcome of this bid should be known by November.

- 3.8. An area where considerable progress has been achieved is in the building of capacity within health and social care services for practitioners to improve their understanding and awareness of autism.
- 3.9. A range of autism specific training has already been undertaken by key staff from the Renfrewshire Learning Disabilities Service (RLDS) who are based in the day services and respite teams. This includes:
- Post Graduate Certificate in Autism,
 - Autism Trainers Award
 - Autism Awareness.
- 3.10. Assisted by a successful bid for funding from the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Augmentative, & Alternative Communication Project, a range of training opportunities associated with autism and general communication techniques have been provided to RLDS staff and partners. This includes:
- Total Communication
 - Picture Exchange and Communication System (PECS)
 - Touch Trust
 - Directed Floor Time
 - Graphic Facilitation
 - Use of Smart-board Technology
- 3.11. To continue to build on these skills and to cope with demand for more specialised services, RLDS is reconfiguring parts of its service to create a new team which will be known as the Autism Support Initiative Team (ASIT). This team will work within learning disabilities day and respite services to enhance the skills of staff, support transitions, develop person-centred care plans for people with autism, and ensure support for family carers. The team will be enhanced by the secondment of a mental health specialist who will provide a link to the wider mental health service and help to develop clearer pathways.
- 3.12. The transition process for children with autism and learning disabilities moving into adult services has been improved. A link worker from the RLDS collates information about the child during their final year and assists in identifying the most appropriate future resource. This enables the development of a person centred care plan which is used to ensure that the new service addresses the individual's needs and wishes.
- 3.13. These children with autism will be allocated a key worker from ASIT to continue to build the care and support plan and link the child with the most appropriate service.
- 3.14. In a further development, it has been agreed that a day services manager from RLDS will be seconded on a temporary basis until 31st March 2016 to assist with widening the membership and active participation of key stakeholders on the AWG, to promote the aforementioned public event in

Implications of this report

1. Financial Implications

All costs are contained within existing budgets.

2. HR and Organisational Development Implications

All new posts have been created under Scheme of Delegation.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young people	The development and implementation of the strategy should increase opportunities for young people at transitions.
Community Care, Health and Well-being	The strategy will provide children and adults with autism access to opportunities to meet outcomes.
Greener	None
Safer and Stronger	- The services will provide greater opportunities for planned social integration

4. Legal Implications

None.

5. Property/Assets Implications

None.

6. Information Technology Implications

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report were previously assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights were identified arising from the recommendations and for noting only. If required following full implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety Implications

None.

9. Procurement Implications

None.

10. Risk Implications

None.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

List of Background Papers

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Katrina Phillips, Head of Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Addictions Services, 0141 314 4401, katrina.phillips@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

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Appendix 1 : Autism Strategy Work Plan

RENFREWSHIRE AUTISM STRATEGY 2014 – 2017 WORK PLAN PROGRESS - September 2015

National policy on autism is contained within the *Scottish Strategy for Autism*, published by the Scottish Government in 2011. Alongside this, there are other policies and legislation that applies to people with autism and shapes how services should be delivered. For example, *The Keys to Life (TKTL)*, published in 2013, is the Scottish Government's 10 year strategy for learning disabilities. This specifically refers to people with learning disabilities who also have a diagnosis of autism, and states that TKTL strategy's 52 recommendations should apply equally to them.

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 places a duty on education authorities that they must consider whether each looked after child or young person for whose school education they are responsible requires a co-ordinated support plan (CSP). This will include children and young people across the full spectrum of autism.

The *Scottish Strategy for Autism* directed local authorities and their partners to develop local strategies to address the needs of people with autism in their areas. In 2014 the *Renfrewshire Autism Strategy* was approved by both Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Community Health Partnership. The Renfrewshire Autism Strategy is a 3 year strategy with the aim of improving the lives of people with autism living in Renfrewshire.

The Renfrewshire strategy is based on the national policy but also reflects the local position on autism within Renfrewshire. In developing the local strategy the views and experiences of service users, carers and other stakeholders were taken into account. This led to 11 recommendations and a number of clear priorities for autism services in Renfrewshire, covering issues such as improved communication and co-ordination between agencies; better access to information for people with autism and their families; greater public and professional awareness of autism; clearer pathways through services; planning structures which a focus on achieving better outcomes for the individual; and smoother transition processes for service users as they move through key life stages. Using these priorities, the Renfrewshire strategy identified eleven key recommendations to improve autism services in Renfrewshire. Progress made on these recommendations during the past year is detailed in the *Work Progress Plan* (below) which also highlights some key achievements and actions requiring to be taken during the coming year to advance the local strategy

Appendix 1 : Autism Strategy Work Plan

RENFREWSHIRE AUTISM STRATEGY 2014 – 2017 WORK PROGRESS PLAN JULY 2015					
	Recommendation	Progress to Date	Future Plans	Responsible Person/Service	Timescale
1	Establish an Autism Working Group (AWG) to oversee service developments and take forward actions identified within the strategy.	Initial cross agency group established in November 2014. Although there is a broad membership reflecting the input into the Strategy, attendance has been problematic. As a result there has been some difficulty in taking forward actions. Funding has been identified to create a temporary post until 31st March. Fiona Brown, RLDS day services manager, has been seconded and will undertake duties as the Autism Co-ordinator taking forward actions over the next 6 months.	To re engage with key partners and organisations to re-establish AWG. • Set up specific working groups to take forward key recommendations / topics / care groups. • Engage with new structures RHSCP, Corporate Structures with Renfrewshire Council etc. • Try to enlist Autism Champions in each sector to set up a communication network AWG Meeting to be arranged with wider membership.	F Brown	December 15
2	Improve data recording and information sharing in relation to autism and the Renfrewshire population, so that this information can inform future planning.	The Social Work Business Improvement Team are aiming to develop the Adult Information System (AIS) to include autism as a category. This will help identify people with autism in receipt of care	All partner agencies to develop and improve their current systems for recording the numbers of people with autism in receipt of services.	F Brown	Update on progress meeting to be arranged December 15

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		services. Other sources of information will be required to more accurately identify the numbers of people with autism living in Renfrewshire.			
3	Adult health and social care services should undertake a review of pathways to assessment and diagnosis to ensure processes are clear and information on pathways is more easily accessible.	Although information on the numbers of people with a diagnosis of autism is available from individual services, there is a question over the reliability and accuracy of the data provided	Need to engage with appropriate services within the RHSCP; e.g. Mental Health, Learning Disabilities, Primary Care, Education, CAMHS, for children and adults to clarify pathways and the accuracy of information held.	F Brown	Update on progress meeting to be arranged February 16
4	Develop and implement an information strategy for autism, the first phase of which would focus on public and third sector agencies, with the second phase focussing on the general public.	Plan to publicise and re-launch the strategy within Renfrewshire at a public event.	Key partners and organisations will be encouraged to assist in the publication and re-launch of the Strategy. Need to identify possible alternative sources of funding, One Stop Shop approach / virtual networks / websites etc. An application has been made to the Scottish Autism Innovation and Improvement Fund to fund a small project to develop the information strategy across Renfrewshire.	K Hendry & F Brown	Update on progress meeting to be arranged January 16

Appendix 1 : Autism Strategy Work Plan

5	Ensure practitioners across health and social services have a basic understanding of the nature of autism and have the opportunity to access further specialist training.	Autism Support Initiative Team (ASIT). The ongoing re design of RLDS Day services has enabled the creation of a small team to be called ASIT. The team will work within the day and respite services to enhance the skills of staff, support people in transition, develop person-centred care plans, and establish links with carers. The team will be further enhanced by the secondment of a mental health worker widening opportunities for links with mental health services. A range of autism specific training has already been undertaken by a number of RLDS staff based in the day and respite teams for example Post Graduate Certificate in Autism; PECs and Autism Trainers Award; Autism Awareness. In addition there has been some success in bids around training including; Scottish Autism Strategy funding, AA&C Grant which enables	To establish ASIT; continue to develop and create training and support opportunities for RLDS staff teams. Coordinate training and learning opportunities across partners e.g. Knowledge Skills Framework Continue to seek sources of funding to expand opportunities. Fiona Brown is working towards an Autism Trainers Award and in conjunction with her current skills and knowledge of autism will be support the above ASI and wider developments.	K Hendry & F Brown K Hendry & F Brown F Brown F Brown	Progress reported December 15
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Appendix 1 : Autism Strategy Work Plan

		training to be delivered.			
6	Review the current transitions arrangements between Children's Services and Adult Services to ensure they are effective, fit for purpose, and appropriate to the assessed needs of young people identified as being on the autistic spectrum and who will require ongoing support into adulthood.	Transitions policy in place between school and adult services. RLDS have an identified senior officer whose role includes responsibility for transitions process and liaison with schools. To assist in the transitions process from the ASN schools, RLDS Services have identified a Transitions Link Worker. The post holder maintains links with the school and assists in identifying the most appropriate future RLDS resource. As required collated information is passed to the appropriate service to enable the development of the My Plan, the person centred care plan used with RLDS Services. ASIT will become actively involved in development of the care plan to ensure successful transitions.	Need to ensure that the new structures with the council and RHSCP are able to continue to support this policy. n.b. New additional support needs school is due to become operational in 2016/17. Link with Children's Services Education to ensure transitions planning continues to be supported and prioritised. Links with transitions planning and support to continue.	B Lithgow B Lithgow K Hendry	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

Appendix 1 : Autism Strategy Work Plan

7	Develop improved transition arrangements to support adults as they move through key life stages.	Strategic Commissioning plans are being developed as part of the new Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership, and will include arrangements to support adults with autism. The draft Local Housing Strategy also includes a section on autism	Need to ensure issues associated with individuals with autism and their families are reflected in the RHWCP strategic plan. Requirement to extend membership AWG and agree changes to remit of AWG including; • AWG group to engage with partners to develop policy associated with transitions at key life stages. • AWG to link with the Commissioning Strategy to ensure transitions is supported. • AWG to engage with partners and where possible identify an Autism Champion. AWG Meeting to be arranged December	F Brown	December 15	
8	Take into account the updated policy on Additional Support for Learning, and work with key agencies including Education and Leisure Services, health	Policy on the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 is in place.	Establish appropriate links with the new structure of children's services within Renfrewshire Council and the HSCP, and include children's services within AWG			

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	and social work, to develop specific action on support for children and young people with autism.	Renfrewshire Council education developing strategy for children with autism	• AWG group to develop appropriate links and enlist representation. • AWG to engage with partners to ensure policy development in relation to autism AWG Meeting to be arranged December	F Brown	December 15
9	Consider options for the provision of information services to people with autism and their families.	At present there is no 'one stop shop' style of provision within Renfrewshire. 6 areas in Scotland were given funding by the Scottish Government to pilot One Stop Shops. This pilot is currently being evaluated and there may be opportunities to consider such a resource in Renfrewshire. Links have been established with the Renfrewshire Carers Centre and they are keen to develop an Autism Carers Support Group for carers in Renfrewshire and are keen to be having representation on the AWG. An application has been	There is a willingness to consider the development of a one point of contact approach such as One-Stop Shops, but this will depend on the success of the current national pilot and on the availability of funding. • AWG to make representation to the Scottish Autism group at Scottish government for development finding. • AWG to continue to link and assist in the development of carer representation • Need to identify possible sources of funding, One Stop Shop approach / virtual networks / websites etc.	F Brown	December 15

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		made to the Scottish Autism Innovation and Improvement Fund to fund a small project to develop the information strategy across Renfrewshire. ASIT – this small team will assist in the development of a coordinated approach to provide information. As part of the day service re design a part time post has been identified to take forward service user involvement and consultation across all RLDS services. This initiative should assist in the provision of information about the needs of people with autism	Service User Participation and Consultation - Post holder to continue to develop work originally funding from CHP Grant. Post holder will be managed within the Community Network part of the RLDS Services	K Hendry	Update on progress at December
10	Adopt an outcomes approach to the planning and delivery of services and supports based around identified needs of the service user, in consultation with service users and carers.	Outcomes focused care planning and review approaches are in place and being further developed across partnerships. Outcomes focused strategic plans are being developed around Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership	Need to ensure that future planning arrangements are inclusive of the needs of individuals with autism and their families. Need to extend membership of AWG; • AWG to engage with partners to develop policy.		

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				F Brown	December 15
11	Investigate options for different models of service delivery including, for example, the possibility of developing shared services where this is both appropriate and cost-effective, and the potential to develop innovative practice.	As above, work is underway on a number of future policies and planning approaches. Links have been established with the Autism Network Scotland. Gateway (formerly the Intensive Support Service designed to meet the needs of people with autism and challenging behaviours) was awarded the Social Work Champions Award for Innovation and Creativity in 2015.	Need to ensure that all partners have the opportunity to keep abreast of new developments and approaches and have opportunities to share practice Need to ensure AWG continues to link into the Autism Network Scotland to build knowledge and seek out opportunities for practice development. As noted above, ASIT will work to maintain and develop up to date knowledge in relation to best practice and innovation Gateway (ISS) will ensure the work and practice developed in this service will be shared across all RLDS services by working closely with ASIT.	F Brown F Brown K Hendry & F Brown	December 15 Update on progress December meeting Update on progress December meeting