

### Appendix 3.

## PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title	
<b>Title:</b> Rotherham All-Age Autism Strategy 2024-2027 Progress Update	
<b>Directorate:</b> Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	<b>Service area:</b> Strategic Commissioning
<b>Lead person:</b> Garry Parvin, Joint Head of Service, Learning Disability and Autism Commissioning	<b>Contact number:</b> <a href="mailto:garry.parvin@rotherham.gov.uk">garry.parvin@rotherham.gov.uk</a> Mobile: 07887057491
Is this a:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy / Policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Service / Function</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>
<b>If other, please specify</b>	
This is a progress update on the delivery of the All-Age Autism Strategy 2024-2027, agreed at Cabinet in February 2024.	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The Rotherham All-Age Autism Strategy 2024-2027 was agreed by Cabinet in February 2024. This report provides an update on the delivery of the strategy and plans to commence consultation on the development of the revised strategy, at the

end of the current term.

There has been significant progress in terms of delivery since February 2024, with an annual audit undertaken in January 2025. Progress includes:

- The expansion of the Promoting Inclusion and Neurodiversity in Schools. This project supports 10 primary educational settings in order to develop both the knowledge and skills of teachers and support staff. The Department for Education (DfE) announced that the PINS project will be extended until March 2026.
- The relaunch of Rotherham's Neurodevelopmental Pathway. The pathway provides assessment and support for children and young people (5-18 years) who may have neurodevelopmental conditions like autism or ADHD. The pathway aims to ensure needs are met regardless of diagnosis and may involve referrals to other services like CAMHS for mental health support.
- Rotherham is also preparing to open the Rotherham SEND Hub. A joint project between Rotherham Parent Carers Forum and Rotherham Council. The hub will be based at the Eric Manns Building. The Hub will offer a range of activities, training, support and partnership with services, with inclusive amenities throughout to reflect the needs of the whole SEND community.
- RDaSH is committed to reducing waiting times for an autism assessment to a 4-week wait in 2026. In Rotherham, waits have significantly reduced over the past 12 months. A trajectory and plan are in place to achieve this.
- Oliver McGowan mandatory training for learning disability and autism. All Rotherham provider Trusts (RDaSH and TRFT) have plans to meet regional training targets. The Council is impacted by these statutory obligations. Funding to support Oliver McGowan mandatory training will end in November 26. It will become Business As Usual (BAU) plans/costings for each organisation are required. Regional planning is in progress to ensure the training is sustainable.
- Be the One campaign. As part of Rotherham's suicide prevention activity, a task and finish group has been created to look at the Be the One campaign and how we can make the campaign more accessible and reach out to autistic adults and other neurodivergent groups. The task group includes representation from Speak Up, RANSS, RMBC and RDASH.
- Rotherham Place - RDaSH, TRFT, ICB and the Council have been working to implement the Accessible Information Standard. The Standard sets out a specific, consistent approach to identifying, recording, flagging, sharing and meeting the information and communication support needs of patients, service users, carers and parents with a disability, impairment or sensory loss.
- Kooth and Qwell are commissioned online mental wellbeing community resources. Both Kooth and QWELL are working to meet Web Content

Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA. Their Clinical model (i-RESPOND) has been adjusted to allow the flexibility to support neurodivergent people and does provide a structure around working with these populations.

- RDaSH have shared examples of making reasonable adjustments to enable autistic people to access talking therapies. These adjustments include meeting an autistic person outside the premises so they would not have to sit in a crowded waiting room and avoiding the receptionist's questions or agreeing to longer sessions or promoting the use of fidget spinners during appointments.
- There are a number of employment projects working in South Yorkshire to open employment opportunities. These include Working Win (South Yorkshire Mayoral Authority), Pathways to ICB (SY ICB), Employment is for Everyone and the development of the Supported Employment Team in the Adult Care Directorate. So far, this academic year has seen 36 supported interns enrol. The Council are hosting 4 internships and the NHS 3. In Rotherham, 50 autistic people and people with a learning disability have found employment.
- Work has commenced with public health, voluntary sector and Rotherham Place SY ICB to develop an early intervention and prevention offer in relation to promoting better mental health for autistic people.

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?	Yes	
Could the proposal affect service users?	Yes	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	Yes	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?	Yes	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	Yes	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?	Yes	

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

N/A

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above, please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above, please complete **section 4**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

##### **Changes in Rotherham's Autistic population since 2024**

In the UK, the estimated prevalence in adults is about 1.1%, with relative consistency across studies [Huang, 2020; NCCWCH, 2022; BMJ Best Practice, 2023; NCCMH, 2023].

The British Medical Association estimates that around 700,000 people in the UK have a diagnosis of autism. One in 100 children in the UK have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.

In Rotherham, based on a diagnosis of 7,578 individuals registered to a Rotherham general practice with Autism in July 2025 and a total of 276,225 patients registered to a Rotherham general practice, the estimated autism prevalence is around 2.7% in the borough.

Autistic people have consistently stated the need for services to be accessible and inclusive. Rotherham remains committed to delivering the 2024-2027 vision. The successful delivery of this vision requires all Rotherham place partners to work together with Rotherham's autistic community to ensure success, with oversight for the strategy sitting under the leadership of the Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board.

Equality, diversity and inclusion principles underpin the development and delivery of the All-Age Autism Strategy 2024 – 2027 and will continue to do so throughout the lifetime of the strategy.

- **Actions**

Cabinet requested that the All-Age Autism Strategy 2024 -2027 action plan be co-produced with autistic people, families and stakeholders. In response, Rotherham Parent Carers Forum led a series of engagement activities, including voice sessions and surveys, to ensure that the priorities reflect lived experience and local need.

These co-production activities have helped shape the development of the action plan, ensuring it is grounded in what matters most to autistic individuals and their families.

Ensuring voice. Autistic people are asking that the voice of autistic people is included in shaping how services are designed and delivered. This has meant that work is currently ongoing to review and transform Rotherham’s All Age Autism Partnership Board.

Work is underway in partnership with Public Health, the Voluntary and Community Sector, and Rotherham Place SY ICB to develop an early intervention and prevention offer aimed at promoting better mental health for autistic people. This collaborative approach recognises the importance of addressing mental health needs early and ensuring that support is accessible, timely and tailored to the experiences of autistic individuals across all ages.

The Rotherham Autism Partnership Board has been a clear partner in developing the delivery plan which accompanies Rotherham’s All Age Autism Strategy.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	14/07/2025
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	30/07/2025
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Garry Parvin, Joint Head of Service, Learning Disability and Autism Commissioning

### 5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Scott Matthewman	Assistant Director, Strategic Commissioning, ACH&PH	01/08/2025

### 6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document

should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	01/08/2025
<b>Report title and date</b>	Rotherham All-Age Autism Strategy 2024 -2027 Progress Update  15 September 2025 Cabinet.
<b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>	
<b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	30/07/25