

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

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| 1. Meeting: | Overview and Scrutiny Management Board |
| 2. Date: | 28th June 2013 |
| 3. Title: | Scrutiny Review of Autistic Spectrum Disorder |
| 4. Directorate: | Neighbourhoods and Adult Services |

5. Summary

This report sets out the response to the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review of Autistic Spectrum Disorder in Rotherham.

6. Recommendations

That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board notes all the recommendations in the review.

7. Proposals and Details

The review was requested by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People because of the apparent high levels of diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Rotherham. This was identified in a report to the Cabinet Member and was explored further in a position paper to the Health Select Commission in July 2012. It was agreed at this meeting that a full review would be required and this would investigate the steady increase in diagnoses within the last 10 years.

The overall aim of the review was to achieve a better understanding of patterns of ASD in Rotherham, leading to the development of appropriate support and assistance to families affected by it. It was understood that the review took place in a climate of budget reductions and therefore also wanted to look at the potential for more effective use of existing resources.

The four stated objectives of the review were to consider, as follows:

- The reasons for the higher diagnosis rates
- Services required at diagnosis stage and after
- 16+ support and transition
- Budget implications

The review was therefore structured around these four objectives, with a dedicated meeting held for each one and evidence presented around these four headings.

Key messages that came out of the review are as follows:

- Early intervention and prevention work is key for children with ASD
- Mental health needs of children and adults with ASD can arise because of the lack of support
- Lack of clarity about where the lead of support lies – Education, Health etc
- Family and home support is a gap in provision
- It is difficult for many parents to make sense of all of the different agencies that are involved in this area of work
- There has been significant progress made with this area of work and this needs to continue with clear leadership and direction.
- To ensure the best outcomes for children and young people with ASD, parental voice and influence is absolutely crucial
- All of the recommendations formed as part of this review are about more effective use of existing resources, achieving better value for money and becoming better organised in delivery of support. It is the view of the review group that there should not be a need for additional resources to implement the recommendations

8. Finance

It was the opinion of the Review Group that the recommendations being forwarded can be implemented without any additional resources being required.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The review group found that there is a lot of provision to support for children ASD, however, resources are not being used effectively in all cases. There is also some confusion about how and where to access these services. This has created a level of uncertainty around this agenda and it is the intention of the review groups via its recommendations to address this.

10. Contact

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