

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	
Title: Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy 2024 - 2027	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Service area: Strategic Commissioning
Lead person: Garry Parvin Joint Head of Learning Disability, Autism and Transition Commissioning	Contact: Email: garry.parvin@rotherham.gov.uk Mobile: 07887 057491
Is this a:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
To ensure that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications for the Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy 2024 -2027 are reviewed and considered.

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?	✓	
Could the proposal affect service users?	✓	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	✓	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		✓
Could the proposal affect how the Council’s services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	✓	
Could the proposal affect the Council’s workforce or employment practices?	✓	

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

Retaining an updated Autism Strategy has been a key ask of Rotherham’s autistic community. The current strategy is grounded on the 4 month co-production exercise conducted by Rotherham Parents Carers Forum.

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?**

The co-production report which informs the strategy 2024 - 2027 has worked to incorporate the voices of people across a range of groups who have protected characteristics, and this has fed through into the strategy and priorities. This dialogue will continue to shape the action/ implementation plan for delivery over the period 2024 - 2027.

Services cited are available to all appropriate groups regardless of their Age, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion and belief, Sex or Sexual orientation.

- **Key findings**

In the UK, the estimated prevalence of autism in adults is around 1.1%. Applied to the Rotherham GP registered population, this would be approximately 2,300 peopleⁱ.

In reviewing Rotherham's GP records, there are 5,504 Rotherham registered patients diagnosed with autism or Asperger's syndrome. 4,036 of these are aged under 25 years old, which may indicate our local rates of diagnosis are higher than the national average and that there may be some adults who have not been diagnosed.

Rotherham's diagnosis rates show an increase in the prevalence of autism across all age groups. The data shows that, although there are more males currently diagnosed, the numbers of females with a diagnosis has increased.

The number of females diagnosed varies across studies, but there is consistently a higher proportion of males to females (mostly ranging from 3:1 to 5:1). The gender split is thought to be as a result of camouflaging difficulties in the female population, alongside under-reporting, and hence under-diagnosis, of traits in girls.

In relation to Council held Adult Social Care data, the Council has 167 autistic people listed on service. Most (81%) have an additional learning disability. This clearly shows a connection with Rotherham's Learning Disability Strategy. 19% of autistic people accessing support of Adult Social Care had either mental health or physical disabilities.

- **Actions**

The strategy covers autistic people living and working in Rotherham. The strategy is all age in scope. This aligns with National best practice. The focus here (and data captured) is autistic people will need support from health and care services.

The strategy states:

We want Rotherham to be a place where:

You can get a timely diagnosis with support, meet professionals with a good understanding of autism, find services, organisations and employers that make reasonable adjustments when required, and where people can feel safe, have aspirations

and fulfil your potential, be independent, and become a full member of the local community.

To ensure that the voice of autistic children, young people and adults was captured and used to inform the strategy, a public consultation was undertaken by Rotherham Parents Forum Ltd from 24th July to 10th October 2023. The following methods were used:

- A Microsoft forms document containing a range of open and closed questions was developed and published online. Text to talk videos reading the long pieces of text were provided as an option. Alternative methods could also be requested. This questionnaire was promoted by the Council as well as the co-production partner.
- A range of engagement events and contacts took place to make people aware of the consultation and how they could take part.

A total of 175 people provided their views and experiences (149 questionnaires and 26 people attended a focus group), of whom approximately 79% identified as autistic. No formal autism diagnosis was required, so this figure also includes people who self-identify or are questioning, and their families. All focus groups were with autistic people.

The following issues were identified and have informed the development of the strategy:

- Lack of transition plans.
- Limited services.
- Rejection by services.
- Develop practical independent living skills.
- Holistic support.
- Co-ordinate services and pathways.
- Assistance with employment and benefits.
- Expand adult services.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	12/12/23
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	14/12/23
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Garry Parvin Joint Head of Learning Disability, Autism and Transition 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	21/12/23

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 For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	14/12/23
Report title and date	Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy 2024 – 2027
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet - 12 th February 2024
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	22/12/2023

ⁱ [[National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, 2012](#); [SIGN, 2016](#); [Buckley, 2017](#); [National Collaborating Centre for Women's and Children's Health, 2017](#); [BMJ, 2018](#); [National Autistic Society, 2018a](#)].