

**DEVELOPMENT OF AN ARGYLL & BUTE AUTISM STRATEGY**

---

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Health and Social Care Strategic Partnership are leading work in Argyll and Bute to develop services for clients with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- 1.2 A multi agency/disciplinary group was established to progress this work in 2012 and has been chaired by J Dreghorn on behalf of the Strategic Partnership since November 2013. The group includes carer representatives and representatives from Autism Argyll.
- 1.3 The group reports to the Council/NHS Joint Managers meeting. Reports on progress will then be communicated through relevant NHS and Council standing groups/committees and to the strategic partnership.
- 1.4 Currently the group is focussed on producing a local Autism Strategy and an action plan based in the service mapping exercise undertaken in 2013.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Committee note work of Autism Strategy Group
- 2.2 Committee note that the Autism Strategy Group commissioned Scottish Autism to prepare a draft Argyll & Bute Autism Strategy by the end of March 2014 (see Appendix).
- 2.3 Committee note that the draft strategy was issued for public consultation with the intention of producing a 2<sup>nd</sup> draft in the council's policy format by end of April 2014
- 2.4 Committee note that the Partnership has to submit an action plan to the Scottish Government by the end of April 2014

**3. DETAIL**

**3.1 Autism Strategy & Action Plan**

- 3.1.1 The Argyll & Bute Autism Strategy Group was established in 2012 following the publication of the Scottish Government's Autism

Strategy in 2011. An Adult Diagnosis sub group was also established.

- 3.1.2 In 2013 a national autism services mapping exercise was undertaken and a council level report was produced identifying gaps in local service provision
- 3.1.3 Based on the mapping exercise, the Strategy Group began to develop an action plan to address the service gaps.
- 3.1.4 In early 2013 the SG wrote to all councils requesting the submission of an action plan by the end of November 2013. The Chair of the Autism Strategy Group wrote to the SG in November to request additional time to complete a local strategy on which to base the action plan. This was agreed and a new deadline of end of April 2014 set. The SG have allocated £35k to Argyll & Bute to assist with the production of a strategy and action plan.
- 3.1.5 In December 2013 the Strategy Group approved a plan to invite tenders/proposals from 3 national organisations, recognised as having expertise in the field of Autism, to prepare the draft strategy on behalf of the partnership. This is compliant with A&B Councils commissioning policy.
- 3.1.6 In January 2014 the chair of the strategy group wrote to the 3 organisations inviting them to submit proposals by the end of January. All 3 submitted proposals and following a review of the proposals at the Strategy Group meeting in January, Scottish Autism we selected to undertake this work.
- 3.1.7 The 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the strategy was received on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and was reviewed by the Strategy Group on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014. The draft strategy (attached) will be revised and submitted to the SG on or before 30 April 2014.
- 3.1.8 Following a further review and approval process the approved Strategy will be submitted to the SG along with the revised and updated action plan.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 After a slow start the Autism Strategy Group are making good progress toward the completion of an Autism Strategy and an Action Plan, which will be submitted to the SG by the end of April 2014 as required. The group has buy in from Autism Argyll and carer representatives as well as a number of key clinicians and managers, and is supported by 2 local councillors

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

<i>Policy:</i>	In line with the partnerships commitment to improve service delivery for marginalised groups within the community
<i>Financial:</i>	Yet to be established but may produce additional costs for both A&B Council and NHS Highland due to need for new services
<i>Legal:</i>	None
<i>Personnel:</i>	None
<i>Equal Opportunities:</i>	Will enhance equal opportunities for those who have Autism in Argyll & Bute by improving access to diagnosis and post diagnostic support for clients and their carers/families
<i>Risk:</i>	Some financial risk noted due to low starting point in terms of service provision. Further reputation risk may follow if unable to achieve the expectations outlined in the strategy and action plan
<i>Customer Service:</i>	Improving outcomes for customers/clients is the main driver for this work.

For further information contact: John Dreghorn  
Programme Director (Mental Health)  
Argyll & Bute CHP

**Cleland Sneddon**  
**Executive Director of Community Services**

**24 April 2014**