



## **ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

**18 JULY 2024**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>ALL AGE AUTISM STRATEGY 2024-2029</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF ADULTS, HEALTH AND STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to present the draft All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2029 for approval.

The strategy formed part of a work programme as an outcome of All Age Disability review which was approved by the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on 13 June 2023.

The report will highlight:-

1. Why this strategy is important;
2. How was this strategy developed;
3. Shared vision, Purpose and Key Priorities;
4. Links with and underpinning of other strategies and plans; and
5. Implementation, governance and impact monitoring.

The report supports the Council Plans:- Wirral Working Together 2023-2027, specifically the 'Promoting Independence and Healthier Lives' and 'Early Help for Children and Families' themes.

The report is a key decision, and it affects all wards.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee is recommended to approve the draft All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2029, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 A high proportion (22.2%) of Wirral residents live with some kind of disability (As defined by the Equality Act 2010). Of this number 5% of people are registered with a GP are diagnosed autistic. This is higher than the national average of between 1-2% of the population. The numbers of autistic people known to services in Wirral are greater than those estimated using recent research (3,950 known compared to 2,330 estimated). Numbers are known to Primary Care, Education and Social care have increased in recent years due to accurate true data obtained from GP practices. Autism is now recorded as a specific category.
- 1.2 The All Age Autism Strategy aims to improve the outcomes for autistic people in Wirral. It also provides strategic direction for the next 5 years to enable the Council to plan ahead and provide improved services, across Housing and the Community, Employment and Education, Health Equality and Improvement, Autism and Mental Health and Co-production and Continually Listen to People's Experience, that support people to live as independently as possible and can prevent needs from escalating.
- 1.3 The All Age Autism Strategy is interlinked with several other strategies across the Council and will be monitored as part of the All Age Disability Strategy 2024-2029. It is important that the delivery plans are cross referenced to minimise duplication and maximise resources.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 Not to approve the All Age Autism Strategy. This would not deliver the best outcomes for autistic people and their families/carers across Wirral.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 All Age Autism Strategy was identified as one of the priorities in the All Age Disability Strategy implementation work programme. This was approved at the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee in June 2023.
- 3.2 This Strategy has been developed jointly between Wirral Borough Council and the Integrated Care System (ICS), and co-produced with stakeholders in Wirral including:

Autistic people, Carers, Professionals, Public, voluntary and community, sector organisations, including care and support.

- 3.3 The development journey involved listening and recognising that language is important, given that people use different terms when speaking about Autism. Within the Strategy, the term 'Autism' is used to encompass Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), Autistic Spectrum Difference and people with Aspergers Syndrome. Some autistic people will also have learning disabilities.
- 3.4 This strategy is for anyone, of any age, who is autistic and their parents and carers. People who were consulted have asked this strategy to refer to their cohort as 'autistic people' rather than 'people with autism.'
- 3.5 The strategy links to the following local strategies and plans. Page 6 of the strategy visualises the overlap between the strategies:
- Wirral Council Plan 2023-2027;
  - Wirral Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027;
  - Wirral All Age Disability Strategy 2024-2029;
  - Wirral SEND Statement of Action 2022;
  - Wirral Supported Employment Strategy 2023;
  - Cheshire and Merseyside Learning Disability and Autism Housing Plan 2024; and
  - Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Strategy 2023-2028
- 3.6 The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that there is the right support at the right time for autistic people, their carers and their families.
- 3.7 The Vision is that autistic people of all ages in Wirral can maximise their potential and live a full and active life within a society that accepts and understands them. That they can access diagnosis and support if they need it and can depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals.
- 3.8 To achieve this shared vision, this strategy outlines three key priorities over the next five years which is aligned to the All Age Disability Strategy. These are:-
1. Autistic people have the right information and support;
  2. Autistic people live fulfilling lives with access to employment, volunteering and social opportunities; and
  3. Autistic people are safe and protected
- 3.9 These three priorities are interlinked, and there is recognition that it is hard for people to achieve their goals in one area if the others are not in place. So, it is important progress is made against these priorities.
- 3.10. The overall aim is to deliver services that are outcome focused aligning with the All Age Disability Strategy. These are:-
1. Improving health and wellbeing;
  2. Living enriched lives;
  3. Having independent lives; and
  4. Gaining employment and economic wellbeing

- 3.11 The strategy will be monitored by the All Age Disability Partnership Board and its associated subgroups. The Board reports to the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee and the Wirral Place Based Partnership Board. It sets out a commitment to ensuring the strategy is accessible, e.g., in easy read and other formats.
- 3.12 The draft All Age Autism Strategy is tabled at Appendix 1. There is also a draft Easy Read summary attached as Appendix 2.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report, the All Age Autism Strategy will look to align, pool, or re-purpose existing resources to ensure the deliverables are achieved in line with its vision and outcomes of this strategy.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council has a legal duty to assess the needs of people who may need care and support, to promote independence and wellbeing, and can apply discretion as to how to meet those needs identified.
- 5.2 The All Age Autism Strategy is in line with statutory requirements including The Autism Act 2009, The Children and Families Act 2014, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (2015). The strategy also supports the Government's National vision for transforming the lives of autistic children, young people and adults for the better, as set out in The National Strategy for autistic children, young people and adults 2021-2026 and in the NHS National Framework set out in April 2023.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 Recognising the current capacity challenges within the Council, resources have been realigned to support the deliverables of this strategy. Successful recruitment and selection have taken place to appoint an All Age Disability Strategic Manager and Officer. As the implementation progresses, if additional resources are required, these will be subject to a separate report.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 There is a low risk that the strategy is not approved. This will be mitigated by the co-production journey of the strategy to deliver the best outcome for autistic people and their families/carers.
- 7.2 There is a risk that the All Age Autism Strategy implementation plan requires further resources. This will be mitigated by the joining up of priorities, better alignment of existing resource, seeking new opportunities for new funding sources and improved partnership working. There will also be in place, a balance of key performance indicators and outcomes, with the governance arrangements to monitor and report progress in a timely manner.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Stakeholders and experts by experience have been engaged in the co-production of All Age Autism Strategy.
- 8.2 Co-production and collaboration will remain at the heart with key stakeholders and experts by experience when producing the strategy implementation plan. Where applicable, consultation will be undertaken.
- 8.3 The All Age Autism Strategy will be shared also to the Children, Young People and Education Committee and Wirral Place Partnership Board

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 An updated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been produced and will continue to be updated as part of the implementation of the proposed deliverables of this strategy. This is located here: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>
- 9.2 This is an inclusive strategy to which equality and diversity is integral. Further consideration will also be given to the need for an EIA for any individual areas of work within the review where this is identified.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Consideration will be given to environmental and climate implications in the planning and implementation of the review, and in its recommendations.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Care provider organisations employ significant numbers of Wirral residents who contribute to the local economy. Autistic people who have greater opportunity to reach their aspirations for work, housing, leisure, learning and volunteering will positively impact on the vibrancy and development of local communities and economies.

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## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2029 (FINAL DRAFT)
- Appendix 2 Draft Easy Read summary of Autism Strategy

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

The national strategy for autistic children, young people and adults 2021-2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-strategy-for-autistic-children-young-people-and-adults-2021-to-2026/the-national-strategy-for-autistic-children-young-people-and-adults-2021-to-2026>

Wirral All Age Disability Strategy 2024-2029

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/1vbhkhsg/wirral-aad-strategy-2024-2029-final.pdf>

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/media/qd1ngwew/all-age-disability-strategy-easy-read-final-accchkd.pdf>

Wirral Learning Disability & Autism Spectrum Disorder

<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/a-to-z-of-jsna-topics/autism/>

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee in accordance with Section 2.2(a) adult social care matters (e.g., people aged 18 or over with eligible social care needs and their careers).

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee	5 March 2024