

**Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board**  
**29<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

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| <b>Report Topic:</b>            | <b>Update on Development of Autism Strategy</b>   |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b>         | Vicki Merrick, Commissioning Team Manager, Adult Social Care, <a href="mailto:Vicki_Merrick@sandwell.gov.uk">Vicki_Merrick@sandwell.gov.uk</a>  |
| <b>Link to board priorities</b> | <p align="center"><b>1. We will work together to join up services</b></p> <p>Service users are at the heart of the development of autism strategy and action plan for the Borough. Sandwell Council is also working with its voluntary and community sector partner, Changing Our Lives, to ensure this strategy will be joined up and fit for purpose.</p> <p align="center"><b>2. We will work closely with local people, partners and providers of services</b></p> <p>Consultation with autistic people, their families and professionals from health, social care and education has formed, and will continue to form, a key part in development of the autism strategy and action plan.</p> |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b>       | To provide an update of actions completed to date in preparing the Sandwell Autism Strategy.  |
| <b>Recommendations</b>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the Health and Wellbeing Board to endorse next steps in preparation of Sandwell Autism Strategy.</li> <li>2. To endorse the timelines and launch date of the Sandwell Autism Strategy.</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Key Discussion points:</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing Our Lives continue to facilitate the involvement of autistic adults, carers and professionals to ensure outcomes focus on</li> </ul>  |

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|   | <p>‘ordinary lives’ keeping people healthier for longer, safer and supported in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the board to offer key stakeholders within their organisations to be involved in the development of the strategy and action plan.</li> <li>• The board is invited to offer feedback on the draft promises/pledges and next steps.</li> </ul>             |
| <b>Implications (e.g. Financial, Statutory etc)</b>   |  |
| <p>Following the publication of the Autism Act 2009, statutory guidance was published which clearly sets out standards and expectations for local authorities and health services when commissioning services for autistic people. Although work has commenced with achieving these standards it is apparent there are gaps in the market and further work needs to be undertaken.</p> <p>It is important to note not all the requirements should be met by health services and local authorities but their ability to shape and influence the approach of the voluntary and community sector and local businesses is key to raising awareness and acceptance within the local community.</p> <p>The strategy and action plan aim to progress and enhance the work to date and ensure all key stakeholders are involved to meet statutory requirements.</p> |  |
| <b>What engagement has or will take place with people, partners and providers?</b>  | <p>A series of consultation events have been undertaken with autistic people, their families and professionals from health, social care and education to develop the strategy and action plan so far.</p> <p>Further engagement will be held to ensure that all key partners are involved in the development of the final strategy and a robust action plan which will deliver the promises/pledges.</p> |

