
Report To:	Education and Communities Committee	Date:	22 January 2019
Report By:	Grant McGovern Head of Inclusive Education, Culture and Communities	Report No:	EDUCOM/03/19/GM
Contact Officer:	Grant McGovern	Contact No:	01475 712828
Subject:	INVERCLYDE'S AUTISM STRATEGY – PROGRESS TO IMPLEMENTATION		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is inform the Committee about the progress made in the implementation of Inverclyde's Autism Strategy 2014.

Further, this report will inform the Committee of the need to move from the previously agreed GtVO grant-funded approach to a strategy of direct contract award in order to deliver the strategy outcomes.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 In 2011 the Scottish Government's ASD Reference Group published The Scottish Strategy for Autism which acknowledged the improvement in the diagnosis, assessment and support for those living with autism through the development of a national 10 year autism strategy. The report provided 26 recommendations that looked to ensure improving services and access to services for those living with autism. Local Authorities were allocated funding from the Scottish Government to support the development of that strategy.

- 2.2 Subsequently, the Inverclyde Autism Strategy Implementation Group (AIG) was set up in April 2014 to oversee the implementation of the Inverclyde autism strategy. This strategy was published in 2014 to cover the ten-year period up until 2024. The strategy was based on a number of themes which would inform how it would be delivered.

As detailed in a previous report to the Committee (see EDUCOM/43/18/GM), the AIG has now evolved to a strategic implementation group restructured to include sub-groups representing the both Autism Community and 3rd Sector partners.

- 2.3 In March 2017, the Policy and Resources Committee approved the allocation of £150K from earmarked reserves to support the aspiration that Inverclyde achieve recognition as an "Autism Friendly Authority". An additional £100K was allocated to the implementation of the strategy as part of Inverclyde Council's budget process in April 2018.
- 2.4 In March 2018, Committee approved the delegation of the governance of grant allocation to the Council's Grants Sub-Committee.
- 2.5 In June 2018, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) agreed to the funding of Autism Strategy Development Office post to be funded from the allocated EMR. It was also agreed that the post would be facilitated by CVS with day-to-day operational matters managed by Hugh Scott, Service Manager CLD. Following the completion of the recruitment process a Development Officer was appointed to the post in October 2018.

2.6 An invitation for applications for grant funding by 3rd Sector partners was posted on Inverclyde's website with applications to be received by the end of August 2018. There were seven applications received from both national and locally based organisations, however only one of the applications met the published criteria sufficiently to recommend to the GtVO Sub-Committee that funding be allocated.

Subsequent advice from Procurement Services is that the negotiation and direct award of contract(s) to external organisation(s) to deliver the identified outcomes would be a more effective route to achieve the strategy outcomes. The outcome criteria have been revised to take account of the grant allocation to the one successful applicant as mentioned above - a copy is attached as Appendix 1

On approval by the Committee, it is anticipated that the direct commissioning process will be completed by the end of January 2019 with work on the projects commencing thereafter.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a. Notes the progress made to date in the implementation of Inverclyde's Autism Strategy;
- b. Agrees to change the strategy from the previously agreed allocation of funding through the GtVO process to a negotiation and direct contract commissioning approach in order to achieve the stated Autism Strategy outcomes.

Grant McGovern
Head of Inclusive Education, Culture and Communities

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In 2011, the Scottish Government's ASD Reference Group published The Scottish Strategy for Autism which acknowledged the improvement in the diagnosis, assessment and support for those living with autism through the development of a national 10 year autism strategy. The report provided 26 recommendations that looked to ensure improving services and access to services for those living with autism.

The vision stated in the strategy is that individuals on the autism spectrum are respected, accepted and valued by their communities and have confidence in services to treat them fairly so that they are able to have meaningful and satisfying lives.

The goals of the Strategy are to be realised in stages - Foundations (by 2 years), Whole-life journey (by 5 years) and Holistic-personalised approaches (by 10 years). Inverclyde's strategy outcomes reflect that staged development.

- 4.2 Development of Inverclyde's Autism Strategy 2014/24 was supported by national funding and produced by the HSCP in partnership with people with ASD, their families and 3rd Sector partner agencies. Inverclyde's AIG was set up to oversee the implementation of the strategy which lays out actions required over that 10 year period to improve the lives of people in Inverclyde with Autism.

The strategy was based on a number of themes which would inform how it would be delivered. The main themes identified are:

- Developing positive, enabling and supportive networks
- Developing a co-ordinated Autism Training Plan for Inverclyde
- Equal and timely access to an evidence-based pathway for assessment and diagnosis and the support that should follow
- A co-ordinated system for advice and information about autism
- Co-ordinated services based on accurate data
- Services that can be robustly evaluated

A copy of the strategy can be viewed at:

<http://www.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk/files/2015/01/Alan-Best.pdf>

- 4.3 The Terms of Reference for the original AIG and rationale for development to the current strategic implementation group are detailed in the report submitted to the Committee in January 2018 (EDCOM/43/18/GM).

- 4.4 In March 2017 the approval was given (see report no: SW/23/2017/BC) for the allocation of £150K from Earmarked Reserves to support the aspiration that Inverclyde achieve recognition as an "Autism Friendly Authority". The AIG subsequently developed three key objectives to achieve that recognition, including:

- Developing community services and supports for people with autism that will assist in achieving an autism friendly Inverclyde;
- Developing services that will help to bridge the gaps that develop for young people impacted by autism at the transition period including signposting, resources and support;
- Early years including pre and post-diagnostic support and services.

Subsequently, in April 2018, an additional £100K was allocated to the implementation of the strategy as part of Inverclyde Council's budget process and Committee approved the delegation of the governance of grant allocation to the Council's Grants Sub-Committee.

- 4.5 In June 2018, the CMT agreed to the funding of an Autism Strategy Development Office post to be funded from the allocated EMR. While this post was to be facilitated by CVS, day-to-

day operational matters are managed by Hugh Scott, Service Manager CLD. Following the completion of the recruitment process a development officer was appointed in October 2018. The main responsibilities of the Development Officer are:

- Co-ordinate the implementation and development of the projects/initiatives funded to deliver the strategy;
- Co-ordinate the activities of Inverclyde's ASIG;
- Chair the ASIG sub-groups (Practitioners Group; Users Group); and
- Develop national and local networking opportunities for those 3rd Sector organisations which support the Autism community; and
- Develop school/education and community based autism support groups, for example peer support of family support groups with the focus on providing support and access to funding opportunities and the development of an Inverclyde-wide autism network.

4.6 Applications for grant funding by 3rd Sector organisations for projects or initiatives to deliver the strategy outcomes we posted on Inverclyde's website June 2018 with application to be received by the end of August 2018. There were seven application received from both national and locally based organisations with, unfortunately, only one of the applications meeting the published criteria sufficiently to merit recommendation to the forthcoming meeting of the GtVO Sub-Committee that funding be allocated.

Subsequent advice from Procurement Services is that the negotiation and direct award of contract(s) with external organisation(s) to deliver the identified outcomes would be a more effective route to achieve the stated outcomes. The outcome criteria has been revised to take account of the grant allocation to the one successful applicant as mentioned above - a copy is attached as Appendix 1. The Service will engage with the market to identify provider(s) who can meet the outcome criteria.

On approval of this change by the Committee, it is anticipated that the commissioning process will be completed by the end of January 2019 with work on the projects commencing shortly thereafter. It will be the responsibility of the Autism Development Officer to monitor the progress of the commissioned projects with regular reports submitted to the ASIG.

4.7 Finally, as noted in the report to the Committee in March 2018, Inverclyde Education and HSCP were invited by Autism Network Scotland to participate in a short-term pilot project on autism support strategies along with four other local authorities. The outcome of those pilots was submitted to the Scottish Government's Strategy Group as part of their review of the national autism strategy.

Inverclyde's contribution to that programme of work was based on the previously identified pre- and post-diagnosis outcome included in our local strategy. It is noted that the national strategy now includes the development of a post-diagnosis toolkit as one of its revised outcomes. See: <http://www.autismstrategyscotland.org.uk/strategy/key-documents.html>

5.0 Implications

Finance:

5.1 There are financial implications at this time.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments

EMR	Autism Strategy	2018 - 19	£250		Funding allocated 2017 – 18. Requested rollover to 2018 – 19.
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Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal:

- 5.2 National Procurement Laws permit the direct award of the health and social care contract(s) proposed in this case.

Human Resources:

- 5.3 There are no staff implications in respect of this report.

Equalities:

- 5.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
✓	NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or Strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

- 5.5 There are no repopulation implications in respect of this report.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Inverclyde Autism Strategy Public Event 2014.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 **Scottish Autism Strategy**

<http://www.autismstrategyscotland.org.uk/strategy/key-documents.html>

- 7.2 Inverclyde HSCP Autism Strategy 2014-24.

<http://www.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk/files/2015/01/Alan-Best.pdf>

Inverclyde Council

Inverclyde Autism Strategy Implementation Group

Commissioning Criteria

Introduction

The Autism Strategy Implementation Group have identified three priorities that, if implemented, will significantly improve outcomes for children, young people and adults with autism and their families and carers. Those priorities are:

- Pre- and Post-Diagnosis Support;
- Transition to Adult Services; and
- Training and raising awareness in the community

The ASIG are now looking to commission the design and development of an implementation strategy, where appropriate, and resources in each area. Successful implementation will require the successful applicant to consult with those with, or impacted by, autism and front-line service providers including Education Services, HSCP and 3rd Sector partner organisations.

1. Pre- and Post-Diagnosis Support

The successful applicant would be required to audit and review the current provision of advice, information and resources available to parents/carers of children with autism-like behaviours and those having received a diagnosis of autism. This will include:

- An audit of current resources across Education and HSCP to inform and support parents and carers. This will include the sign-posting of service providers and other support networks;
- Conduct a review of existing information/communication to parents/carers – advice leaflets, brochures, on-line including website and social media;
- Identify exemplification of existing good practice by creating links with other local authorities and national support organisations;
- Work with Inverclyde's Autism Officer to develop a strategy to address identified gaps in resources and skills;
- Develop and design an effective pre- and post-diagnosis communication strategy that will include resources as stated above.

2. Transition to Adult Services

The successful applicant will further develop existing services to support young people and adults impacted by autism at a time of transition. This will include strengthening links with schools, Further and Higher Education, training and employability and adult support services. As with 1. above, this workstream will include the review and development of a range of literature and on-line resources signposting young people and adults to appropriate services and support. This will include:

- Audit of current provision to support transition post-education and to appropriate adult services, e.g. HSCP; centre-based community groups, 3rd Sector providers, training and employment and post-16 education;

- Review of existing information/communication on transitions including signposting, resources and support available for those impacted by autism;
- Identify gaps in service provision and work with Inverclyde's Autism Officer to develop an appropriate strategic plan;
- Develop and design an effective communication strategy to support effective transition;
- Create links with local organisations providing autism training and awareness raising, see 3. below.

3. Training and raising awareness in the community

The successful applicant will develop a framework to raise awareness of Autism in Inverclyde and provide support, advice and access to training for front facing staff in both the public and commercial sectors. This will include the provision of an organisations awareness of the development of an autism friendly environment, including commercial premises, e.g. shops and office space and, particularly front-facing customer services. This will include liaising with Inverclyde's Autism Officer to:

- Identify opportunities to facilitate the development of new and existing autism support groups across Inverclyde, e.g. peer support;
- Develop a communication strategy for networking existing and developing support groups using on-line and social media applications;
- Develop a communication strategy and implementation plan to raise awareness of Autism across Inverclyde, see 1. above;
- Identify existing good practice in community services and support;
- Work in liaison with Inverclyde Alliance Partners and commercial and public service providers to co-ordinate opportunities for training of front-line staff and to improve awareness of autism in Inverclyde;
- Develop strategic and working partnerships with commercial and public service providers across Inverclyde, e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Inverclyde Leisure, transport companies, etc.