

Report

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Report to:	Social Work Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 November 2017
Report by:	Director, Health and Social Care

Subject:	Autism Resource Co-ordination Hub (ARCH) Update
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise Committee of the background and current progress of the development of the Autism Resource Co-ordination Hub (ARCH) since its formation in June 2016
- ◆ advise of progress of ARCH in supporting the development of the South Lanarkshire Local Autism Action Plan to sit within the Scottish Strategy for Autism

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the progress made in the development of the ARCH, as highlighted in the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the consultation and engagement process, which has been initiated in the development of South Lanarkshire's Local Autism Action Plan to sit within the National Scottish Strategy for Autism, be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. Following the closure of the Pan-Lanarkshire One Stop Shop based in Motherwell, which was managed by Scottish Autism, in May 2016, interim arrangements were put in place to deliver an alternative South Lanarkshire Autism Service. Interim arrangements were put in place with an initial location within Fairhill Lifestyles until 1 July 2016. On 4 July 2016, the service provision moved to Hamilton Academicals Football Club (HAFC), primarily in recognition of the needs of children with autism and their siblings requiring a more suitable venue during the school summer holiday period.
- 3.2. Following the school summer holidays in 2016, the Council identified premises in Burnbank, Hamilton. The service moved on a permanent basis to the premises in Burnbank on 22 August 2016. This move has represented a positive way forward in the development of a recognised Autism Hub within South Lanarkshire.
- 3.3. At a meeting of the Executive Committee in March 2017, agreement was given for the Council to meet the running costs of the premises for a two year period as well as the recruitment of a Co-ordinator and administration support to support the service and look to develop a South Lanarkshire Local Autism Action Plan.

- 3.4. The model of service delivery adopted in ARCH is an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach which seeks to identify and engage with the strengths in communities and mobilise the capacities of all autism partners in the private, statutory, voluntary and parent led sectors within South Lanarkshire.
- 3.5. The ARCH is committed to promoting and implementing the 4 strategic outcomes outlined in the revised Scottish Strategy for Autism – Outcomes Approach (2015) namely:
- **Outcome 1:** A Healthy Life: People with autism enjoy the highest attainable standard of living, health and family life and have timely access to diagnostic assessment and integrated support services
 - **Outcome 2:** Choice and Control: People with autism are treated with dignity and respect and services are able to identify their needs and are responsive to meet those needs
 - **Outcome 3:** Independence: People with autism are able to live independently in the community with equal **access** to all aspects of society. Services have the capacity and awareness to ensure that people are met with recognition and understanding
 - **Outcome 4:** Active Citizenship: People with autism are able to **participate** in all aspects of community and society by successfully transitioning from school into meaningful educational or employment opportunities.
- 3.6. ARCH is active in facilitating the development of services within the community, many of which are delivered by the community itself alongside partners in the statutory, private and third sectors. Parent carer support groups are delivered collaboratively between parent carer volunteers and staff across Social Work, Education and Health as well as third sector providers. This involves guidance, signposting and support to fellow parent carers and people affected by autism themselves. The Lanarkshire Carers Centre has also been commissioned to provide a staff member to co-work/facilitate one of the constituted parent carer support groups held in the centre.
- 3.7. The service has worked with and engaged with a range of services in designing and delivering supports based within ARCH. Attached at Appendix 1, is a list of services that have engaged and shows the range of opportunities to raise awareness and promote autism services across the Council. You will see from the list there are a varied range of statutory and non statutory agencies as well as local and national groups. This list is not exhaustive and continues to expand.

4. Development of the Service

- 4.1. ARCH has progressed the next phase in the development of a South Lanarkshire Local Autism Action Plan. A SNAP survey has been developed and has been sent out to all stakeholders across South Lanarkshire. The analysis of the feedback from the survey will be used to identify shared themes and form the selection of representative focus groups. These will include multi agency personnel, parent/carers and individuals with autism themselves.
- 4.2. The focus groups will be asked to inform the Local Autism Action Plan with identified areas of priority. The 'plan' will sit within the National Scottish Strategy for Autism, and the local priorities will remain consistent with the four strategic outcomes outlined in the 2015 refreshed Scottish Government document as identified at section 3.5. above.

- 4.3. Autism specific services have been developed over the past 14 months. These include: Paediatric Autism Consultancy (PAC) Team, who have delivered workshops and have committed to a presence over the next 12 months. The PAC Team will also provide diagnostic clinics (Bi-Monthly) where children and their parent carers can come to ARCH, which is a non-clinical setting, to be assessed and diagnosed by a Paediatrician and Speech and Language Therapist.
- 4.4. Workshops addressing autism specific issues have been delivered such as;
- ◆ explaining diagnosis
 - ◆ visual supports and extreme demand avoidance
 - ◆ NHS Lanarkshire Paediatric Occupational Therapy Team has and will undertake workshops on 'Life skills for children on the spectrum'
 - ◆ Social Work Resources' Occupational Therapy Team provide workshops on sensory processing issues and hyper/hypo sensitivity as well as parent sessions using 'Ketso' problem-solving approaches
 - ◆ the National Autistic Society (NAS) have delivered workshops on 'managing challenging behaviour' as well as workshops on managing autistic meltdowns by 'Piece Together for Peace Together' consultancy team
 - ◆ Visual Processing Disorder workshops have been presented by Ian Jordan – a world leading optician and speaker on sensory integration
 - ◆ support groups such as O.T. led relaxation sessions for children with autism, Lego-based play workshops by 'Bricks for Kids'
 - ◆ Speak Out Advocacy service surgeries
 - ◆ Sleep Scotland advice surgeries
 - ◆ Social Opportunity groups are also based within ARCH and deliver for primary children with autism (COAST), teens with autism (SAIL), young adults with autism (SAIL) and young adults with autism and additional support needs (COVEY 'ANGELS' – Additional Needs Gaining Experience and Life Skills)
- 4.4.1. Sanderson ASN High school in East Kilbride S.5-S.6 transitions group use the ARCH every week as a resource to support young people approaching their transition year in acquiring basic social skills. The 'from who' parent carers support groups are now facilitated at both day and evening times in order to accommodate parent carers with employment commitments. Action for Children's Silvertonhill community respite group uses ARCH every Saturday and Sunday to facilitate their respite service for children with autism and additional support needs. South Lanarkshire 'Money Matters' provide regular welfare benefits and advice surgeries.
- 4.5. ARCH has been actively involved in raising the profile of autism both within the community, the health and social care partnership, third sector and voluntary organisations. One way of doing so has involved making links with partners in the emergency services that is Police, Fire and Ambulance Services.
- 4.5.1. Following discussion with key personnel about gaps in the awareness of front line staff about autism, ARCH collaborated with SAIL and produced the 'Autism At-A-Glance' card which has been widely distributed within each service, as well as the wider community. Whilst the 'At a Glance' card had originally been intended to bridge the identified awareness gap in services, many groups have praised the 'common sense' approach of putting some basic information on a small card to be used whenever required when encountering or interacting with individuals with autism.

- 4.6. A common theme identified throughout Scotland's autism community has been the scarcity of accessible and clear information regarding autism and autism services. To address this, ARCH developed a public information leaflet which has been widely praised as being clear and concise (Appendix 2). This leaflet has been distributed by Autism Network Scotland to the other 31 Scottish Local Authorities as a template for good public information. In a further development, ARCH collaborated with Social Work Resources' Information Officer and designed the first South Lanarkshire HSCP Internet site autism page. Further development of this page will incorporate links for users and carers to relevant support and services.
- 4.7. Other social media options for sharing information within the autism community are also being explored and considered, including the option of setting up an ARCH Face Book page. This is in recognition that the parentcarers@ARCH group have already set up their own Facebook page which is being effectively used as a means of digital inclusion to communicate with and support individuals affected by autism throughout South Lanarkshire.
- 4.8. ARCH also collaborated with Autism Network Scotland and SAIL in developing the South Lanarkshire 'Autism Awareness' cards which were developed in recognition of further gaps in provision identified by parent carers who were finding the lack of autism informed awareness on the part of the wider community a persistent problem. This card has also been widely distributed and allows parent carers to quickly alert less well-informed others about their cared for child/adult with autism traits which have often been poorly understood and tolerated by those in the 'neuro-typical' community. This is a term used in the autism community for those who do not have autism or other neurological conditions.
- 4.9. The ARCH Easter, Summer and October week programmes of support were developed and delivered in conjunction with Education Inclusion, Sportsworx, Carers of Autism Spectrum Together, Sense Scotland and Hamilton Accies Community Outreach Team. This was a very effective and successful piece of local collaboration between the respective agencies in the third, statutory and parent led sectors (Appendix 3).
- 4.10. ARCH collaborated with VASlan to produce a 'directory of autism services' which has been widely distributed and updated. This has allowed both parent carers and users to see what autism services are available within South Lanarkshire and is the first time autism specific provision has been collated in the one document (Appendix 4).

5. Further Developments

- 5.1. ARCH is currently in discussion with COVEY Befriending service and COAST (Carers of Autism Spectrum Together) in exploring the viability of a sibling support group. This has been a further area of unmet need identified by parent carers, and will be progressed in the coming months.
- 5.2. ARCH staff has been collaborating with lead staff in Autism Network Scotland, the ARC (Autism Resource Centre Glasgow) and Glasgow City Council in seeking to develop a Basic Autism Awareness programme which will be targeted at the wider community as well as parent carers. This will fulfil the objectives of the NES Autism Training Framework and aspire to achieve an autism 'informed' level of awareness within the wider South Lanarkshire community and generic workforce. The basic awareness programme will be in addition to existing provision offered by the Lanarkshire Carers Centre but which is exclusively for parent carers, and the 'Learn Online' programme for Social Work Resources' staff.

- 5.3. The ARCH has been collaborating with the various parent carer/charitable groups who use the centre in undertaking autism friendly adaptations including a sensory garden, a sensory shed, a pop up sensory tent, and subdued lighting. There have also been successful funding applications submitted by these groups to the local Archdiocese, Scotwest Credit Union and the Bank of Scotland.
- 5.4. ARCH is hoping to adapt some innovative sibling support materials produced by the Lanarkshire Carers Centre and Education Resources with Biggar High School pupils who produced the 'My Story, Your Story, Our Story' packs into an accessible electronic version for wider distribution to siblings of those affected by autism.
- 6. Overview of Current Engagement and Involvement Exercise**
 - 6.1. The next phase of the revised Local Autism Action Plan will involve the collation of the Snap survey responses. Once this has been completed, three sets of focus groups will be recruited from those volunteering to do so via the survey.
 - 6.2. Focus group will identify key areas of local priority which will form the basis of the Local Autism Action Plan for South Lanarkshire. It is intended that this will be a 5 year plan 2018 – 2023.
 - 6.3. It is the intention through the above to bring a South Lanarkshire Local Autism Action Plan to a future Council committee for sign off and approval.
- 7. Employee Implications**
 - 7.1. There are no employee implications in relation to this report.
- 8. Financial Implications**
 - 8.1. Staff running costs were agreed at the Council's Executive Committee in March 2017 as £51,694- £56,865 staffing costs. These costs will continue to be met by a 50/50 split between Social work Resources and Education Resources for the two year duration previously agreed.
 - 8.2. Social Work Resources will continue to meet the running costs of £8,000 per annum.
- 9. Other Implications**
 - 9.1. There are no risk implications associated with this report.
 - 9.2. The current commitment to funding the Arch in its current format is for two years. It will be essential to have a clear exit plan in place to ensure that long term sustainability can be delivered after the two year project. On completion of the South Lanarkshire Local Autism Action Plan, an exit strategy should look at how the community and third sector providers can sustain the model as it develops.
 - 9.3. There are no other issues associated with this report.
- 10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**
 - 10.1. There is no requirement to carry out an equality impact assessment in terms of the proposals contained within this report.
 - 10.2. Consultation is under way as part of a SNAP Survey and planned Focus Groups.

Val de Souza
Director, Health and Social Care

6 October 2017

Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives

- ◆ Get it right for every child
- ◆ Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults
- ◆ Strengthen partnership working, community leadership and engagement

Previous References

- ◆ Executive Committee - 8 March 2017

List of Background Papers

- ◆ none

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Janet Neill, Service Manager

Ext: 4504 (Phone: 01698 454504)

Email: janet.neil@southlanarkshire.gcsx.gov.uk

1. NHS Lanarkshire PAC (Paediatric Autism Consultancy) Team,
2. Education Inclusion services, Sportsworx ,
3. NHS Lanarkshire Speech and Language Team,
4. NHS Lanarkshire Paediatric Occupational Therapy Team,
5. Social Work Occupational Therapy Team,
6. South Lanarkshire Money Matters,
7. COVEY,
8. PAMIS South Lanarkshire,
9. The National Autistic Society,
10. The Lanarkshire Carers Centre,
11. 'Speak Out' advocacy Services,
12. The Govan Law Centre,
13. Carers Of Autism Spectrum Together (COAST),
14. Supporting Autism In Lanarkshire (SAIL),
15. Parent/Carers@ARCH (constituted group),
16. The NHSL Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS),
17. Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASlan),
18. Autism Network (Scotland),
19. Hamilton Accies Community Outreach Team,
20. South Lanarkshire Leisure Services,
21. Glasgow City Council,
22. 'Action for Children' Silvertonhill Community Outreach Team,
23. Sanderson ASN High School in East Kilbride,
24. 'Bricks for Kids',
25. SENSE Scotland,
26. Community Links South Lanarkshire,
27. Sleep Scotland,
28. Police Scotland,
29. Fire and Rescue Scotland,
30. The Scottish Ambulance Service,
31. 'Piece Together for Peace Together' consultancy services,
32. Jordan's Eye Care,
33. The Richmond Fellowships' Positive Pathways' project,
34. Wincanton Transport
35. Grahams Building supplies.