
**Health, Housing and Adult Social Care
Scrutiny Committee**

21 May 2025

Report of the Director of Public Health

Update on the Autism and ADHD Health Needs Assessment and Strategy 2025-2030

Summary

1. Committee members previously received a report on the Autism and ADHD Health Needs Assessment (HNA) in November 2024. This report also detailed plans to develop an autism and ADHD strategy for York.
2. The aim of today's report is to:
 - bring the HNA back to members for final discussion and comment prior to publication
 - bring the early draft version of the Autism and ADHD Strategy 2025-2030 to members for initial discussion and comment
3. This Scrutiny discussion is intended to form part of a broad coproduction approach to the strategy, including public consultation which has been undertaken since December 2024 and will last until the strategy is published in October 2025.

Background

4. Autistic people and people with ADHD are a core and vital part of our community in York. Their health needs, their well-being, their access to good high-quality services constitute an important part of our ambition to make York a 'health-generating city' and to fulfil the aims of our Health and Well-being Strategy around reducing inequalities.
5. It is clear that a combination of under-resourcing and a rising number of people coming forward for Autism and ADHD diagnosis and assessment has meant that services are in this area – from health to social care to

education and beyond – are very stretched. This means that individuals and their families frequently report feeling under-supported.

6. Additionally civic society – from our public spaces to our shops, amenities, criminal justice system and beyond – has not kept pace with what we have learned enables an inclusive and equal public sphere for Autistic people and people with ADHD.
7. The draft HNA was brought to Scrutiny committee in November 2024, and the comments of members as well as input from public speakers have been reflected in an updated version which is attached at Annex A.
8. The HNA shows clearly that the health of Autistic people and those with ADHD is worse than the general population. There is nothing inherent in neurodiversity which would mean this group in society should experience significantly poorer health, however Autistic people and people with ADHD have a larger number of mental and physical health conditions, have higher levels of homelessness, have on average 5 years less life expectancy than the general population, higher rates of additions, and experience significant barriers to full inclusion in society.
9. All partners have a role to play in building a more inclusive society and in providing services in a high-quality manner which serve neurodivergent individuals well. In particular, health services and council services have a duty in statutory guidance to plan services, develop partnerships and commission together in response to the national autism strategy, one of the few health-specific strategies named in law.
10. York has not had an autism strategy since 2021; a gap in time which is far too long. This scrutiny discussion today builds on the HNA and is intended to focus on the draft Autism and ADHD strategy covering 2025-2030 (Annex B).
11. It is important for Scrutiny committee members and public readers / participants / observers of the committee meeting to note that this is an early draft strategy, which has had a number of different opportunities so far to be discussed by partners and those with direct experience of Autism and ADHD, but still has a number of months of consultation and coproduction to go, prior to being published at a Council Executive meeting in Autumn alongside the SEND/Alternative Provision Strategy for the city with which it has close links.

Consultation

12. The phases of engagement and consultation are outlined below:

May-November 2024	An Autism and ADHD Health Needs Assessment was produced, using data from health and care services as well as evidence from the literature on the health needs of autistic people and people with ADHD.
October 2024	A strategy working group was formed, including the key partner agencies in York as well as academic, voluntary agencies and lived experience. A full list of steering group members can be found in the strategy.
Nov 24 - Mar 25	'Listening Exercises' were held where members of the strategy group went out to over 20 organisations or boards with 3x 'conversation starters' on the strategy, and captured feedback. A full list of organisations can be found at in the strategy.
May 2025	An early draft strategy was circulated, and published for public discussion at the council's Health, Housing and Adults Scrutiny Committee.
June-July 2025	Consultation events will be held on the draft strategy, to further shape and refine it.
July 2025	Formal public consultation will be carried out on the strategy, and comments incorporated.
Autumn 2025	The final Autism and ADHD Strategy 2025-2030 will be published.

Council Plan

13. This work is in line with the Council Plan 2023-2027 proposal to 'Co-produce and publish our approach to supporting people with Learning difficulties, mental health, autism and delivery of adult social care'

Implications

7. **Financial** There are no direct financial implications of this report, which is for members to discuss and feed in to a city wide strategy. Individual organisations are responsible for resourcing the commitments in the

strategy, and for City of York Council all commitments will be delivered within existing budgeted resources.

- **Human Resources (HR)** There are no HR implications of this report
- **Equalities** ACAS state that 'Some neurodivergent people do not see themselves as disabled. However, being neurodivergent will often amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010'. There are therefore equalities implications of this strategy, which aims to include Autistic people and people with AHD better within society and services and will have a positive impact on inequalities
- **Legal** There are no legal implications of this report
- **Crime and Disorder** There are no crime and disorder implications of this report
- **Information Technology (IT)** There are no IT implications of this report
- **Property** There are no Property implications of this report

Risk Management

There are no known risks directly relating to this report.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- 1) Note and discuss the Autism and ADHD Health Needs Assessment (HNA)
- 2) Note and discuss the early draft version of the Autism and ADHD Strategy 2025-2030

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**

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Date 13/5/25

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

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For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex A: Autism and ADHD in York: A Health Needs Assessment (Draft May 2025)

Annex B: A city that works for all: Autism and ADHD Strategy for York 2025-2030 (Draft May 2025)