

**2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012****Agenda Item 10****REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, PERSONAL CARE AND SUPPORT  
(YOUNGER ADULTS)****TEMPORARY ADDITIONAL CAPACITY TO SUPPORT THE  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ADULT ASPERGERS TEAM****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the appointment of additional social work capacity on a temporary basis in the Nottinghamshire Adults Aspergers Team.

**Information and Advice**

2. The prevalence of all autistic spectrum disorders is estimated to be approximately 1% of the population, therefore in Nottinghamshire it is estimated that there will be over 3,000 people with the condition at any given time. This number has been increasing and will continue to increase over the next ten years. This is thought to be due to increased awareness leading to better identification, a broadening of the definition of autistic spectrum disorders and changes in diagnostic processes. It is likely that such changes will continue to contribute to an increased number of individuals being diagnosed, at least in the short to medium term.
3. The Adults Aspergers Team was established in 2009 to deliver social care services to local residents who have Aspergers disorder or other high functioning autistic spectrum disorders. The team of four and a half FTE social care workers, plus Team Manager is based in Mansfield and operates across the county, delivering assessment, care management functions, and professional support to 200 people. The team therefore know of about 10% of the population with Asperger's Syndrome in the County after 3 years of operation and have conducted over 300 assessments
4. The current rate of referral to the team shows that the team is receiving around 200 new referrals per year. Many of the people referred have very complex needs, the majority of people will have some form of communication difficulty, many have risks attached to offending behaviour and most are socially isolated.
5. This service is a leading social care service and is often cited in national strategy and policy documents as an exemplar of good practice.
6. Nottinghamshire has not had a specific NHS service for people with Aspergers and therefore there has not been a specific health pathway for people with high functioning autistic

disorders. However, this pathway has now been developed and is being published which may increase the number of referrals as more people are diagnosed with this condition.

7. During the last twelve months, it has become clear that the team requires additional capacity to deal with the volume of referrals in a timely manner. The current organisational redesign work being undertaken within the department has allocated additional resource to this team; however these resources will not fully be in place until the last quarter of the year.
8. The team has a number of outstanding assessments to complete on people newly referred to the service including young people who are transitioning from children's services who require adult social care. Discussions have commenced to consider how the team can operate more effectively and manage demand differently over the next twelve months and introduce a revised operating model.
9. Therefore this report proposes to establish an additional social worker post for one year to assist in meeting the current demands in the team.

### **Reason/s for Recommendations**

10. This report recognises the growing number of referrals in this area of service, together with the current high volume of casework. The report also notes the work being undertaken to manage workloads and additional resources being deployed in the medium term, but requests a temporary short term increase in capacity to deal with immediate pressures.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required. Funding is available from Departmental Reserves for the Savings and Efficiency Programme.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommended that the Adult Social Care and Health Committee approves the establishment of:

- 1) 1 fte (37 hours) temporary Social Work post, scp 29-39 (£24,646 - £32,800), for a period of one year with effect from the date of appointment and the post be allocated approved car user status. The total cost of the post including on-costs and travel is £43,000. The post holder will be based in the Nottinghamshire Adults with Aspergers Team.

**JON WILSON**

**Service Director for Personal Care and Support (Younger Adults)**

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**Constitutional Comments (KK 31/05/2012)**

12.The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.

**Financial Comments (SC 14/06/2012)**

13.The financial implementations are set out in the report and funding is available from Departmental Reserves for the Savings and Efficiency Programme.

**Background Papers**

None.

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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