

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Cabinet
Date:	Monday, 19 th January 2026
Subject:	Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024 – 29 Annual Progress Report
Lead Member:	Cllr Anna Wright, Social Care and Public Health
Chief Officer:	David Coleman-Groom Executive Director, People Adults
Contact Officer:	Jane Senior, Director of Commissioning, People Adults Giuseppe Di Martino Commissioner for Learning Disability and Autism
Ward(s):	ALL
Key Decision:	YES
Exempt:	NO
Decision Subject To Call In:	YES
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Slough Adult Autism Strategy 2024-29 – 2nd year update Appendix 2 - Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report asks Cabinet to note the progress of the Slough Adult Autism Strategy 2024-29, which was approved at Cabinet in February 2025.
- 1.2 The Strategy seeks to ensure that autistic adults experience equal rights and can access the same opportunities as everyone else in Slough.
- 1.3 The Strategy has been informed by engagement events with autistic adults and the wider community, both prior to its development and since, in person and online.
- 1.4 The Strategy is being delivered by the multi-party Autism Steering Group which is co-chaired by an officer and a representative from Slough Autism Together (SAT) who is also a member of the wider Slough Borough Council co-production network.
- 1.5 Delivery of Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024 - 2029 supports continuous improvements across Adult Social Care and meeting the Council's CQC Assurance requirements.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) Note the progress made during year 2 in the delivery of the Slough Adult Autism Strategy 2024 - 2029 Action Plan as set out within the report at Appendix 1.
- (b) Note the intention to broaden scope and develop and all-age Neurodivergence Strategy over 2026, subject to resource availability.

Reason:

To ensure that progress has been made with the delivery of the Slough Adult Autism Strategy 2024-2029.

In doing so ensure that autistic adults and their carers in Slough are supported to achieve positive wellbeing outcomes and an improved quality of life.

Commissioner Review

This report is outside the scope for pre-publication commissioner review; please check the [Commissioners' instruction 5 to CLT to sign off papers](#) for further details.

2. Report

Publishing the progress of the Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024-2029 contributes to the following priorities:

Slough Corporate Plan

A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives

- Working with partners to target health inequalities and promote well-being.
- Supporting residents to be as independent as possible whilst providing quality services for the most vulnerable.
- Staying healthy, remaining independent at home, and meaningfully engaging with the community are important elements in achieving a good quality of life.

Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2022-25

Priority 2: Integration

- Increase the number of people living independently at home and decrease the proportion needing specialist services.
- Increase the number of people managing their own health and care needs.
- Increase employment opportunities to enhance people's independence

2.1 Options considered

Options	Pros	Cons
<p>Option 1</p> <p>Deliver an annual progress update of the implementation of the Slough Adults Autism Strategy.</p> <p>Recommended</p>	<p>Transparency, accountability to, and oversight from Members in the delivery of a Cabinet approved Strategy.</p> <p>An opportunity to refresh and update Strategy priorities informed by latest local intelligence.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Option 2</p> <p>Do not update Cabinet of the progress in the implementation of the Slough Adults Autism Strategy.</p> <p>Not recommended</p>	<p>No clear advantage to not reporting on progress.</p>	<p>A missed opportunity to provide information concerning progress.</p> <p>Lack of transparency and accountability to members and the Autism community</p>

Option 1 is recommended

2.2 Background

[Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024-29](#), provides an opportunity to strengthen the Autism offer within the town - based upon evidence and information obtained through engagement. The Strategy sets out 8 key priorities for Autism in Slough which are aligned to intended Corporate Objectives. The priorities are:

- Promote independent living
- Providing quality support in the community
- Implement the integration of Health and Social Care
- Pathways for transition to adulthood
- Pathways to support employment, skill development and training
- Empowering people to stay safe and free from abuse
- Prevent loneliness and social isolation
- Improving communication and information sharing

Further detailed information concerning each of these priorities is found in Section 8 of the Strategy.

The Strategy contains an “Autism Strategy Action Plan” setting out a range of initiatives which will be implemented to deliver against the priorities. These include mapping the customer journey and developing a clearer set of operational pathways for Autistic people especially in key areas such as employment, education, skills development. One of the key elements of the action plan is to take a targeted approach that promotes and enables people’s autonomy and independence by working together to prevent deterioration of needs across health and social care, to tackle social isolation and loneliness, and to ensure meaningful lives for autistic people within their communities.

This second annual report back to Cabinet seeks to note the progress two years on. It recognises the significant amount of work which has been undertaken to build upon the robust partnership framework established in year 1, strengthening the Autism Steering Group and supporting the development of Slough Autism Together (SAT) to deliver the Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024-2029.

Year 2 has focused on strengthening the partnerships and co-production approaches established in year 1, delivering significant community events, developing business partnerships, enhancing health and wellbeing initiatives, and building SAT as a sustainable community-led organisation that can drive the autism agenda forward in Slough

The Autism Steering Group meets on a quarterly basis and is Co-Chaired by the Learning Disability and Autism Commissioner and a representative from Slough Autism Together. Slough Autism Together, which was established as the Autism Community Coffee Chat group in year 1, has gone from strength to strength throughout year 2, gathering more members and moving toward becoming a formal registered community interest company (CIC).

SAT has actively participated in SBC planning activities to make Slough a more neurodivergent friendly town.

A full summary of the highlights, challenges and progress against the action plan is included in the update report at appendix 1.

In brief, some of the key highlights for this year, include:

- **Slough Autism Together (SAT) Establishment and Growth:** SAT, which began as the Autism Community Coffee Chat group in year 1, has gone from strength to strength throughout year 2, gathering more members and moving toward becoming a formal registered community interest company (CIC). SAT has actively participated in SBC planning activities, attending meetings to deliver their actions and agendas to make Slough a more neurodivergent friendly town.
- **Autism Celebration:** Organised a highly successful Autism Celebration event at the 3rd Scout Hut in Upton Court Park bringing together autistic adults, carers, families, and young people. The event featured speakers sharing their autism journeys, a SAT member sharing their university graduation experience, professionals with international careers, and Creative Dance where friendly dance classes are provided by neurodivergent dancers. This was a great opportunity to connect, learn, and show support for autism and neurodiversity across Slough.
- **Business Partnerships:** Developed ongoing partnerships with major businesses in Slough. Dulux has been delivering workshops on using colour to reduce sensory distress and providing sensory aids. Lego has been working with SAT and volunteers to support creative expression through their bricks. These partnerships are creating the foundation for a future universal approach to Autism and Neurodivergence in Slough.
- **Enhanced Public Health Partnership:** Strengthened partnership with Public Health on Autism Wellbeing Promotions, promoting the Slough Health Bus delivering free NHS health checks during SAT meetings. Working with Solutions4Health to deliver active movement classes at Chalvey Community Hub designed for neurodivergent adults.
- **Autism Berkshire Groups:** Autism Berkshire has been delivering groups and drop-in support services at local libraries, providing autism advocates to support the

community with information, signposting, fun activities, and peer support. Activities have been funded through the One Slough grants programme.

- **Community and Cultural Engagement:** Engaged with Slough Museum and OneSlough, discussing a calendar of activities and volunteering opportunities to be delivered at the museum. Regular engagement is maintained with cultural and community partners to co-produce inclusive initiatives.
- **Continued Partnership Working:** Continued to work with Mental Health Services and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to improve access to services, assessment, and post-diagnosis support. Continuing to work with Learning Disability Services to ensure strong pathways for those with more complex needs. Employment partnerships have been further enhanced, creating opportunities for independent living. We will work together to:
 - **Create stronger links with primary care** to improve coordination and early support.
 - **Enhance the community offer pre- and post-diagnosis** through solution-focused initiatives.
 - **Raise awareness of autism among hospital staff** and improve hospital appointment experiences by promoting **Reasonable Adjustments** and the **Dynamic Support Register**.
 - **Deliver the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training** to ensure staff have the right skills and understanding.
 - **Identify the most effective specialist model** to support individuals with more complex needs within the community.
 - **Harness technology and innovation** to improve service delivery and user experience.

Some of the challenges include:

- **Resource Constraints:** Limited funding and staffing continue to impact the pace of progress on some initiatives, particularly around capacity for one Commissioner covering both Autism and Learning Disability portfolios.
- **Partnership Coordination:** Communication, availability, and buy-in challenges occasionally delay project timelines, despite the overall strength of partnership working and community engagement.
- **Assessment Waiting Times:** Long waiting times for autism assessments through the ICB remain a challenge, impacting timely identification and support for autistic adults seeking diagnosis.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications directly relating to the publication of the update on the Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024/2029. Any procurement activity arising out of the Action Plan will be subject to approval through the Council's Contract Procedures Rules and will only be authorised subject to the availability of budget.

The Adults Autism Strategy will need to be delivered within the existing Adult Social Care budget envelope once approved for 2026/27.

3.2 Legal implications

The Autism Act 2009 required the government to develop an Adult Autism Strategy. The Local Authority must follow the Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy. The guidance is issued under s2 of the Autism Act 2009.

3.3 Risk management implications

Risk	Assessment of Risk	Mitigation	Residual risk
One Commissioner covering both Autism and LD Portfolios means some actions may progress more slowly.	Medium	Strong co-production through SAT. Steering group provides capacity. SAT to become self-governing by the end of 2025 – reducing support required by the Council.	Low/medium
Insufficient budget to support commissioning intentions.	High	Focus on cost-neutral partnerships and only commissioning within the available financial envelope.	Medium
Reluctance from Health Partners to pursue an integrated arrangement.	Medium	Further discussion with partners through partnerships arrangements – including the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Social Care Partnership Board Shared understanding of risks, aspirations and barriers to integration from all relevant partners.	Low

3.4 Environmental implications

There are no environmental implications

3.5 Equality implications

It is intended that the Strategy will have a positive impact upon the lives of people with a disability by supporting individuals to live a good quality of life as independently as possible within the local community and to access joined up health and social care.

The Strategy acknowledges that autistic adults may experience significant health inequalities and reduced life expectancy compared to the general population. To address this, we have worked closely with Public Health by promoting the Slough Health Bus that provides free NHS health checks (cholesterol, blood pressure), and actively encouraged uptake among the Autistic community. Additionally, active movement classes will be established at community locations in partnership with Solution4Health, designed by and for autistic people to improve physical health and wellbeing.

The Strategy is also likely to have a positive impact on the lives of younger adults who are transitioning to adult services, by reviewing the local market for care and support and ensure that this meets the particular requirements of younger adults who are adjusting to living as independently as possible within the community.

A full Equalities Impact Assessment is set out in Appendix 2.

4. Background Papers

None.

Appendix 1 2nd Year Updates – Action Plan

The Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024-2029 sets out 8 key priorities delivered through 14 action themes. Year 2 has focused on strengthening community partnerships, celebrating achievements, and building sustainable support structures.

The Action Plan below sets out progress made in Year 1 and Year 2, and planned activity for Year 3.

1. Partnership working

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Foster collaboration between stakeholders through regular meetings, working groups, and other forms of engagement.</p>	<p>Engagement with autistic adults, families and carers</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Autism steering group created. Autism Community Coffee Mornings established.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> SAT has gone from strength to strength, gathering more members and moving toward CIC registration. SAT actively participated in SBC planning activities to make Slough more neurodivergent-friendly. Planned withdrawal of SBC Commissioner from SAT as the group becomes self-organising.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Complete CIC registration for SAT. Quarterly meetings to continue. Representatives to continue to participate in broader Autism Steering Group. Expand stakeholder engagement. By June 2026.</p>

<p>Develop a shared vision for improving services and support for autistic adults in Slough. This could involve working with health partners, SBC disability forum, and ASC to set common goals and objectives.</p>	<p>Engagement with health partners and statutory stakeholders</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Creation of calendar of support initiatives with ICB-funded organisations Autism Berkshire and library network. Development of prevention campaigns with Public Health.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Strengthened partnership with Public Health on Autism Wellbeing Promotions. Promoted Slough Health Bus delivering free NHS health checks during SAT meetings. Working with Solution4Health to deliver active movement classes at Chalvey Community Hub.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Expand health promotion initiatives. Increase health check uptake. Launch additional wellbeing programmes. Ongoing throughout 2026.</p>
<p>Share resources and expertise between stakeholders, including information, best practices, and training opportunities.</p>	<p>Engagement with community and commercial partners</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Autism Steering Group representation at Slough SME network established.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Significant partnerships with major businesses: Dulux (workshops on colour and sensory aids) and Lego (creative expression through bricks). Autism Together statutory and third sector partners creating foundation for universal approach to Neurodivergence in Slough.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Expand business partnership programme. Outline ambition to develop neuro-inclusion charter for local businesses. By December 2026 working with the ND Slough Staff Network, Slough Borough Council HR Team, the Equalities Team, and SBC Policy Leads.</p>

<p>Engage in joint projects and initiatives to improve services and support. This could involve collaborating on research, developing new service models, or launching community programs.</p>	<p>Co-production of initiatives to improve how organisations work together</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Co-production of volunteer-led leisure activities at libraries. Autism Community Coffee morning established.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Engaged with Slough Museum and SCVS discussing calendar of activities and volunteering opportunities to be delivered at museum. Regular engagement with cultural and community partners.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Launch Museum activities programme. Develop volunteering opportunities in conjunction with the Prevention and Carers Commissioner and Sough Community and Voluntary Services. Expand community engagement initiatives. By April 2026.</p>
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2. Phased approach in the delivery of our priorities

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>We recognise that developing a phased approach to delivering priorities will require ongoing engagement and collaboration with key stakeholders.</p>	<p>Engagement with autistic adults, families, and carers Reporting to cabinet annually on progress Progress through governance routes (quarterly)</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Continued engagement with autistic community. Regular update and reporting established.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Phased approach continues with strong community oversight. Regular governance reporting maintained. Priorities reviewed based on community feedback and emerging needs.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Continue phased delivery. Annual Cabinet report. Quarterly Steering Group meetings. Review of governance arrangements. Ongoing throughout 2026.</p>

3. Establish a steering group with oversight of this strategy.

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Establish steering group co-chaired by autistic people, their families and carers to have oversight of strategy. The group will be pivotal to ensure strategy delivery and will co-produce actions that meet needs of autistic people.</p>	<p>Regular involvement of right stakeholders Autistic Slough residents work with council to deliver actions Engagement with autistic adults, families, and carers</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Action implemented. Steering group successfully established and operational.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Steering group thrives with active participation from autistic adults, carers, and stakeholders. SAT members taking increasing leadership roles. Group ensures autistic voices central to service design, measuring impact of initiatives.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Continue steering group meetings. Expand member participation. Strengthen workstream oversight. Ongoing throughout 2026.</p>

4. Train our workforce on autism - The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training Autism for providers

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Oliver McGowan training is an important initiative. The training covers autism awareness, communication and sensory issues, mental health, and reasonable adjustments. By ensuring health and social care providers receive this training, they will be better equipped to provide high-quality, person-centred care.</p>	<p>Engagement with autistic adults, families and carers Training completed by health and social care staff Improved access to mainstream health services CQC rating and feedback Progress through governance routes (quarterly)</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Planning commenced for Oliver McGowan training rollout. Requirements scoped with partners.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Work with health and social care partners ongoing. Timeline extended to ensure adequate volunteer recruitment meeting autism community needs.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Launch Oliver McGowan training programme for local health and social care staff. Monitor completion rates and evaluate impact on service quality. By September 2026.</p>

5. Autism awareness as an employer to ensure our staff recruitment is autism friendly.

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Raise autism awareness as an employer to create more inclusive and supportive workplace. Develop understanding of autism, create autism-friendly recruitment</p>	<p>Feedback on recruitment process Training of staff Engagement with SBC HR and Learning & Development Engagement with</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Meeting with Director of HR and Director of Commissioning to describe ambition around neuro-inclusive working practices. Design of autism awareness training by Coffee morning group. LD and Autism Commissioner active in Disability forum.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i></p>

<p>process, support existing autistic employees, and encourage positive work culture promoting diversity and inclusion.</p>	<p>Community, Learning and Skill team Engagement with DWP Autism champions Engagement with SBC Disability Forum</p>	<p>Neurodivergent Staff Network established by SBC Director of Commissioning and SCF Commissioning Assistant with active and engaged CLT Executive Director Sponsorship. Active and growing membership of the Network with neurodivergent staff (autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia etc.)</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Ongoing activity to raise awareness and integrate and embed neuro-inclusive practices into workplace culture and policy.</p>
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6. Improve access to information and communication

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Making sure contact details are clear and accessible. Reviewing information on Council website to make web pages accessible and easy read. Producing autism-friendly literature in plain language. Exploring autism-friendly technologies.</p>	<p>Use of videos and multimedia resources Engaging with SCVS for directory of services Engage with co-production network for plain language resources</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Task and finish group for communication created. Autism webpages created. Design of accessible resources by Coffee morning group (in progress).</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Autism webpages regularly updated with co-produced media and easy read materials.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Complete accessible resource library. Launch video content explaining services. Ensure all key information available in easy read. Explore use of British Sign Language videos.</p>

7. Support in the community

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Create capacity for community support initiatives like peer mentoring. Support effectiveness of hospital discharge processes. Improve semi-independent accommodation offer. Develop life-skills programmes. Scope Autistic Housing register.</p>	<p>Feedback from autistic adults, families and carers Exploring use of technology Training for hospital staff, ASC, and locality teams Engagement with housing and Community, Learning and Skill team</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Drop-in service development with ICB, Autism Berkshire, and libraries. Ways into work drop-in at The Curve. Discussion of expert-by-experience resources.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Drop-in support continues at The Curve with Ways into Work providing weekly employment support. Funded community support groups in partnership with ICB and CVS (One Slough grants programme) run by Autism Berkshire for women, young people, and solution-focused groups.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Launch expert by experience programme. Expand life skills workshops to additional venues. Complete specialist accommodation strategy with autism-specific provision.</p>

8. Increase autism awareness within the wider population in Slough

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Co-produce community initiatives aimed at increasing autism awareness in wider population. Develop autism awareness</p>	<p>Feedback from autistic adults, families and carers Engagement with wider population Hold Autism Friendly day each year</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Successful Autism Day event with SCF. Planning 2025 event with Steering Group. Autism groups established as pivotal to these actions.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Organised highly successful Autism Celebration event at 3rd Scout Hut in</p>

capacity. Dedicated autism-friendly days with commercial partners. Development of autism-friendly spaces in town planning. Engagement with authorities, education, housing, and emergency services.	Work with Supermarkets and commercial partners for autism friendly times Provide Autism Awareness training for SBC departments	Upton Court Park. Celebratory gathering brought together autistic adults, carers, families, and young people. Event featured speakers sharing experiences, SAT members sharing graduation journeys, professional presentations, and Creative Dance classes by neurodivergent dancers. <i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Plan annual celebration event for 2026. Engage with emergency services for autism awareness.
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9. Enhance the employment, training and skills offer for autistic adults of all ages

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
Develop partnerships with employers, training providers, and community organisations. Engage with employers to promote benefits of employing autistic adults and dispel misconceptions. Provide training to employers for inclusive practices. Offer specialised training and support to enhance employability.	Engagement with autistic adults, families and carers Feedback from commercial partners Work with DWP to review numbers in employment Engagement with Community, Learning and Skill team Engagement with SCVS	<i>Year One Update</i> Autism Steering and Coffee Groups established. Engagement with local networks. Weekly drop-in at The Curve with Ways into work. Strong link with SCVS established. <i>Year Two Update</i> Ways into Work drop-in sessions continue providing employment support and skill development opportunities. Autism Berkshire running solution-focused groups to support individuals with specific problems or challenges. <i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Launch employer engagement programme. Develop supported employment opportunities. Increase employment outcomes for autistic adults. By December 2026.

10. Transition to adulthood

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Ensure active engagement with SEND Board and Strategic Transitions Group. Early planning and early allocation to ASC staff from age 17. Improved access to multimodal and multimedia information for young autistic people and carers, including single accessible point of contact for advice and advocacy.</p>	<p>Engagement SEN/SCF Feedback from autistic young adults, families and carers Clearer communications between ASC and SEN Pathways/MOU between services Focus on prevention and life skills from younger age Direct engagement with colleges</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Carers of younger autistic people in Steering and Coffee Groups. Further ASC and SEN partnership planned for 2025. Transitions workstream for Task and Finish Group. Drop-in advocacy resources development.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Not progressed due to other pressing priorities</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Complete transitions protocol review. Ensure all young people have transition plans by age 17. Strengthen college partnerships. By June 2026.</p>

11. Preventing Loneliness and social isolation

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Steering group engages with statutory services, SCVS, CPN, commercial partners and community to co-design initiatives promoting socialisation</p>	<p>Engagement with autistic adults, families and carers Develop community opportunities Use of technology to prevent loneliness</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Activity calendar at libraries led by Autistic Adults. Technology discussion (VR). Task and finish group for community access. Steering Group leading co-produced initiatives. Preliminary EBE discussion. Scoping multifunctional hub.</p>

<p>and community engagement. Promote digital and in-person opportunities. Support existing initiatives. Scope multi-functional hub. Develop mentoring programme. Engage with town planning and transport.</p>	<p>Engagement with town planning for inclusive spaces Engagement with transport department Engagement with CPN, SCVS, DWP</p>	<p><i>Year Two Update</i> Engaged with Slough Museum and OneSlough discussing activities and volunteering opportunities. Increasing visibility of Autism Strategy through Health and Social Care Partnerships Board and Health and Wellbeing Board. Key area for further development includes formal links with employers, transport planning, and workforce upskilling to support neurodivergent adults.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Launch comprehensive activities programme in several venues and for several needs.</p>
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12. Safeguarding autistic adults

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Develop autism-specific safeguarding policy recognising unique needs. Provide training for staff. Promote awareness among autistic adults and families. Ensure access to appropriate support services. Collaborate with partner agencies including law enforcement. Progress technology programmes for safety.</p>	<p>Engagement with autistic adults, families and carers Engage with Safer Slough Partnership and Safeguarding Board Training needs Work with Criminal Justice Service Technology as safety mechanism Engage with Police and emergency services</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Safeguarding Partnership Board involved in safety workstream. Safer Partnership Scheme exploration with businesses. Police in Task and Finish group. Drop-in services with Autism Berkshire and ICB.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> No further updates for 2025.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Develop autism-specific safeguarding guidance. Deliver safeguarding training programme. Implement technology-enabled safety solutions. By December 2026.</p>

13. Health inequalities

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Health inequalities are significant for autistic adults who face barriers to accessing healthcare. Identify barriers.</p> <p>Develop autism-specific services with sensory-friendly environments.</p> <p>Work with health colleagues to tackle waiting lists for assessment. Provide training for healthcare professionals. Promote health education.</p> <p>Address social determinants.</p> <p>Collaborate with partners.</p>	<p>Engagement with autistic adults, families and carers</p> <p>Engage with Public Health for Autism Needs assessment</p> <p>Engage with Healthwatch for improved access</p> <p>Improved communication with health partners</p> <p>Engage with ICB for diagnostic pathways</p> <p>Pathways/MOU between services</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i></p> <p>Public Health engaged with Steering Group. Planning community resources at libraries for low-sensory health checks. Coffee Group engaged with Public Health for accessible health literature.</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i></p> <p>Further strengthened partnership with Public Health on Autism Wellbeing Promotions. Promoted Slough Health Bus delivering free NHS health checks (cholesterol, blood pressure) during SAT meetings. Working with Solution4Health to deliver active movement classes at Chalvey Community Hub designed for neurodivergent adults. Moving forward, Steering Group will actively work with Public Health and partners to promote prevention, early intervention, screening, and improve diagnostic pathways and pre/post diagnosis support.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i></p> <p>Expand health promotion initiatives. Partner with primary care networks on reasonable adjustments.</p>

14. Future commissioning intentions towards the development of an all-age approach and opportunities for integrated provision between health and social care.

What we will work on to achieve these actions	How we will know if we are making progress	Where are we now (Year 2)
<p>Although this strategy is focused on autistic adults only, the ambition would be that the next strategy would be an All-Age Autism Strategy. This will require significant investment of time, resources, and expertise involving wide range of stakeholders to ensure strategy is comprehensive, evidence-based, and addresses diverse needs across lifespan.</p>	<p>We will scope feasibility in due course and set target completion date</p>	<p><i>Year One Update</i> Preliminary engagement with SCF and ICB. Initial talk of joint Universal Neurodivergence Strategy (very early stages).</p> <p><i>Year Two Update</i> Engagement with SCF and ICB ongoing. Initial discussions of joint Universal Neurodivergence Strategy continue at very early stages.</p> <p><i>Year Three Planned Activity</i> Undertake scoping for All-Age Neurodivergence Strategy.</p>

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

Directorate: People Strategy & Commissioning People (Adults)	
Service: Adults Autism Strategy 2024-29 – Cabinet Updates, 2nd Year	
Name of Officer/s completing assessment: Giuseppe Di Martino	
Date of Assessment: 02/12/2025	
Name of service/function or policy being assessed: Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024 -2029	
1.	<p>What are the aims, objectives, outcomes, purpose of the policy, service change, function that you are assessing?</p> <p>This assessment relates to the Year 2 progress update of the Slough Adults Autism Strategy 2024-2029, which was approved at Cabinet in February 2024.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out how the Council, working with its partners, will seek to reduce health inequalities for autistic adults, so that more people can live a good quality of life as independently as possible within the local community.</p> <p>The Strategy seeks to further join up services, with health, social care, and community partners working together in an integrated way to identify solutions that improve lives. This includes a focus on promoting independence, preventing loneliness and social isolation, and ensuring meaningful lives for autistic people within their communities.</p> <p>Year 2 has focused on strengthening community partnerships through Slough Autism Together (SAT), delivering significant celebration events, developing business partnerships (Dulux, Lego), enhancing health and wellbeing initiatives with Public Health and Autism Berkshire, and building SAT as a sustainable community-led organisation.</p>
2.	<p>Who implements or delivers the policy, service or function? State if this is undertaken by more than one team, service, and department including any external partners.</p> <p>Delivery of the action plan contained within the Strategy continues to be overseen by the Autism Steering Group comprising autistic adults, carers, Council officers and professional stakeholders including representatives from Frimley Integrated Care Board (ICB). The Steering Group is Co-Chaired by the Learning Disability and Autism Commissioner and a representative from Slough Autism Together (SAT).</p> <p>Implementation involves multiple teams including Adult Social Care, Public Health, Mental Health Services, Children's Services (Slough Children First), Community Safety Partnership, and external partners including Frimley ICB, Autism Berkshire, local Police, community organisations (Slough Museum, OneSlough, Dulux, Lego), Solution4Health, and Ways into Work.</p>
3.	<p>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example, who are the external/internal customers, communities, partners, stakeholders, the workforce etc. Please consider all of the Protected Characteristics listed (more information is available in the background information). Bear in mind that people affected by the proposals may well have more than one protected characteristic.</p>

	<p>The Strategy affects autistic adults (protected characteristic: disability) and indirectly their carers and families. Autistic people may have multiple protected characteristics including age, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation.</p> <p>Year 2 initiatives have been designed to be inclusive and accessible to all autistic adults regardless of other protected characteristics, with specific attention to co-production ensuring that diverse voices are heard and accommodated through SAT and the Autism Steering Group.</p>
4.	<p>What are any likely positive impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? You may wish to refer to the Equalities Duties detailed in the background information.</p> <p>Year 2 progress has delivered positive impacts across all equality categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability: Enhanced support through SAT development as sustainable CIC, Autism Celebration event bringing community together, business partnerships creating autism-friendly opportunities, and continued partnership working with ICB, Mental Health Services, and Adult Social Care. • Health Inequalities: Public Health partnership delivering Health Bus NHS checks during SAT meetings, Solution4Health active movement classes at Chalvey Youth Hub designed for neurodivergent adults, and Autism Berkshire delivering drop-in support services at libraries. • Age: Transitions planning with Slough Children First and SEND Board, activities suitable for all ages through Museum and OneSlough partnerships. • All Protected Characteristics: Co-production approach through SAT and Steering Group ensures all voices heard; accessible communications developed by Autism Community Coffee group; mystery shopper evaluations demonstrate genuine co-production. • Community Integration: Community partnerships (Museum, OneSlough, Dulux, Lego, libraries) create inclusive opportunities for participation, volunteering, and employment.
5.	<p>What are the likely negative impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? If so, then are any particular groups affected more than others and why?</p> <p>No negative impacts have been identified from the Year 2 progress update. However, challenges have been noted:</p> <p>Resource constraints have meant some initiatives have progressed more slowly than initially planned. One Commissioner covering both Autism and Learning Disability portfolios impacts capacity. These delays affect all autistic adults equally.</p> <p>Partnership coordination complexity has occasionally resulted in slower progress, though this is balanced by the benefit of genuine co-production ensuring better outcomes.</p>

	Mitigation: Year 3 plans account for these challenges with realistic timescales and continued strong co-production approach through SAT.
6.	<p>Have the impacts identified in (4) and (5) above been assessed using up to date and reliable evidence and data? Please state evidence sources and conclusions drawn (e.g. survey results, customer complaints, monitoring data etc).</p> <p>Evidence sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autism Steering Group meeting records and attendance data Task and finish group feedback and progress reports Autism Celebration event attendance and feedback (3rd Scout Hut event) SAT membership growth tracking and CIC development progress Partnership feedback from Dulux, Tesla, Public Health, Autism Berkshire Health Bus utilisation data and NHS check uptake Solution4Health class attendance at Chalvey Youth Hub Museum and OneSlough engagement records Feedback from autistic adults, carers, and families through SAT and Coffee group ICB assessment waiting time data
7.	<p>Have you engaged or consulted with any identified groups or individuals if necessary and what were the results, e.g. have the staff forums/unions/ community groups been involved?</p> <p>Extensive engagement has been maintained throughout Year 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autism Steering Group meeting quarterly with strong participation from autistic adults, carers, providers, and professionals SAT (Slough Autism Together) established and growing, with autistic adults taking leadership roles in planning and delivering agenda Autism Celebration event co-produced with SAT members, featuring autistic speakers sharing their experiences Business partnerships (Dulux, Tesla) developed through consultation with SAT on community needs Health initiatives (Health Bus, active movement classes) designed with input from autistic community Autism Berkshire delivering services informed by community feedback <p>Results: High levels of satisfaction with co-production approach. Autistic adults and carers report feeling heard and involved in decision-making. SAT members actively participating in SBC planning meetings demonstrates genuine partnership.</p>
8.	<p>Have you considered the impact the policy might have on local community relations?</p> <p>Year 2 progress has had a positive impact on local community relations:</p>

	<p>Strengthened partnerships with community organisations (Museum, OneSlough, Autism Berkshire, libraries, Slough Children First) demonstrate commitment to inclusion</p> <p>Business partnerships with Dulux and Tesla creating foundation for future universal approach to autism and neurodivergence</p> <p>Autism Celebration event brought together diverse community members, promoting understanding and acceptance</p> <p>SAT participation in SBC planning meetings strengthens community voice in town planning</p> <p>Health partnerships demonstrate collaborative approach to addressing health inequalities</p>
9.	<p>What plans do you have in place, or are developing, that will mitigate any likely identified negative impacts? For example what plans, if any, will be put in place to reduce the impact?</p> <p>Whilst no negative impacts on protected characteristic groups have been identified, the following plans are in place to address challenges:</p> <p>Year 3 planning incorporates realistic timescales accounting for Commissioner capacity and partnership coordination requirements</p> <p>Completing SAT CIC registration to establish sustainable community-led organisation</p> <p>Continued prioritisation of co-production whilst managing timescales effectively</p> <p>Continuing ICB engagement to address autism assessment waiting times</p> <p>Planning Oliver McGowan training launch to improve understanding across health and social care workforce</p> <p>Developing autism-friendly recruitment resources to improve employment opportunities</p> <p>Application of lessons learned from Year 2 to inform Year 3 delivery</p>
10.	<p>What plans do you have in place to monitor the impact of the proposals once they have been implemented? (The full impact of the decision may only be known after the proposals have been implemented). Please see action plan below.</p> <p>Monitoring arrangements:</p> <p>Quarterly Autism Steering Group meetings continue to provide oversight</p> <p>SAT provides ongoing community-led monitoring and feedback</p> <p>Annual progress reports to Cabinet ensure accountability</p> <p>Continued engagement with Autism Berkshire and other partners provides independent feedback</p> <p>Outcomes from Year 3 initiatives will be monitored including equality impacts.</p>

What course of action does this EIA suggest you take? More than one of the following may apply	✓
Outcome 1: No major change required. The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.	✓
Outcome 2: Adjust the policy to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers identified? (Complete action plan).	
Outcome 3: Continue the policy despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to ensure that the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact (see questions below). (Complete action plan).	
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink the policy when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (Complete action plan).	

Action Plan and Timetable for implementation

At this stage a timetabled Action Plan should be developed to address any concerns/issues related to equality in the existing or proposed policy/service or function. This plan will need to be integrated into the appropriate Service/Business Plan.

Action	Target Groups	Lead Responsibility	Outcomes/Success Criteria	Monitoring & Evaluation	Target Date	Progress to Date

Name: Giuseppe Di Martino Signed:(Person completing the EIA)
Name: Signed: (Policy Lead if not same as above)
Date: 02/12/2025