

Engagement Assurance Committee Cover sheet

Title	Engagement to inform the development of the autism community service					
Meeting date	8 July 2026	Agenda item Number	3	Paper Enclosure Ref	C	
Author	Ian Sutton, Children & Young People and Autism Project Lead, SEL ICB Learning Disability & Autism Programme					
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Paper is for:	Assurance		Decision		Information	X
Purpose of paper	The paper provides a high level overview of the SEL ICB Learning Disability & Autism Programme of engagement activity in the development of a community autism service.					
Summary of main points	The paper outlines the ways in which the Learning Disability & Autism Programme aimed to draw upon the lived experience of the local neurodiversity community people to improve our understanding of needs and to co-design with them a subsequent service model.					
Potential conflicts of Interest	None					
Sharing and confidentiality	For sharing					
Relevant to these boroughs	Bexely	X	Bromely	X	Greenwich	X
	Lambeth	X	Lewisham	X	Southwark	X
Equalities Impact	Autism qualifies as a disability under the Equalities Act 2010. This project was aimed at addressing the specific inequalities faced by autistic adults who do not have a learning disability by establishing accessible and appropriate community services.					
Financial Impact	N/A					
Public Patient Engagement:	During May and June 2025 South East London ICB Learning Disability & Autism Programme undertook an engagement exercise with the support of the ICB Engagement team to enable the Programme to draw upon the lived experience of the local neurodiversity community people to improve our understanding of needs and to co-design with them a subsequent service model. This involved: Publishing a project on the on-line engagement platform at Help us to improve services for autistic people in south east London Let's Talk Health and Care South East London where we published:					
Outline timelines of engagement						
Outline key engagement mechanisms used						
Outline engagement with diverse						



communities and / or people with lived experience	- An on-line survey asking for the views and experiences of autistic people and carers of autistic people. - An invitation to autistic people, and their carers, to attend focus groups looking at gaps in services for autistic people and how we might address these gaps. - Recruitment opportunities people with lived experience from the autistic community to sit on a planning group involving ICS staff and NHS providers looking at future service provision.
Outline key themes from insight gained	
Outline how findings have influenced decision making	
Outline how feedback to participants has taken place	
Committee engagement	This programme of engagement activity informed the design of a Community Autism Service to be provided by Oxleas NHS Trust and South London & Maudsley NHS Trust. This service is currently at the recruitment stage. A report of the findings from the survey and focus groups was produced and published on the let's talk project page and highlighted in the Get Involved monthly bulletin in June 2025.
Recommendation	The consultation and service design were overseen by the South East London ICB Learning Disability & Autism Operational Board. A sub-group of this Board was convened as a 'Task & Finish Group' to oversee the design and development of the Community Autism Service. This sub-group included members of the community with lived experience of autism. The committee is asked to provide assurance on the engagement undertaken.

