

6. CONSULTATION – TOWARDS A DRAFT AUTISM STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND – RESPONSE BY WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL EDUCATION SERVICE

The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Reference Group had been reconvened by the Minister for Public Health and Sport in February 2010. The Group had drafted a document “Towards an Autism Strategy for Scotland” on which the Scottish Government had now invited comments.

The Education Executive considered a report by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) (which had been circulated) which outlined the terms of the “Towards an Autism Strategy for Scotland” consultation and sought approval of a draft response.

The Education Executive noted that the consultation was separate from the parliamentary consultation which had been considered in August 2010 on the Autism Scotland Bill which had been undertaken by Hugh O'Donnell. From that earlier consultation, the Government had concluded that the same outcomes could be achieved without legislation as the Autism Strategy for Scotland was at such an advanced stage and had agreed in principle with the drafting of a National Autism Strategy.

The Strategy set out a vision that all people on the autism spectrum were “respected, accepted and valued by their communities and had confidence in services to treat them fairly so that they were able to have meaningful and satisfying lives”. It provided a review of current best practice and suggested ways to build on those foundations which was summarised in 26 recommendations in the paper. Full information on the provision of existing services for children and young people in West Lothian was provided in the report.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) recommended that the Education Executive approve the terms of the proposed response to the Scottish Government consultation as outlined in the appendix to the report.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.