

**Draft Minutes yet to be ratified**

**Autism Partnership Group**

**October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014**

**Kindle Centre**

**Present**

Ben Clayton	Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Valerie Fitch	Hereford Carers Support, Person on the Autistic Spectrum and Parent
Jane Clayton	Parent
Paula Daniels-Symonds	Parent
Mary Godwin	Parent
Richard Green	Parent
Michelle Baillon	Parent
Sylvia Nicholls	Chair Hereford Disability United (HDU)
Sara Siloko	HDU
David Malins	Herefordshire ASPIE LINK
Aubrey Baillie	Independent consultant in Autism
Les Knight	Head of Provider Services – Children’s Well Being - Additional Needs
Colin Jeavons	Healthwatch
Jane Wiseman	Stonham Housing
Debbie Holloway	Brandon Trust
Carol Soble	Specialist Teacher for Complex Communication Difficulties
Sean Slater	2gether Trust
Gareth King	West Mercia Police
Neville Meredith	Equalities Team Herefordshire Council
Paul Choppen	Herefordshire Council
John Gorman - Chair	Commissioning Officer

Apologies;  
Colin Boughen  
Helen Boughen  
Sally Green  
Jonathon Williams  
Mandy Shrimpton  
Sue Black  
Stuart Blake  
Rose Hunt  
Trea Connon

**Previous minutes**

John Gorman reported the following outcomes from the actions of the previous meeting;

- Expenses – John Gorman confirmed that the matter had been discussed with both Cllr Powell and with the director of Adults Wellbeing (Helen Coombes) and that work had been started on to draw up a common policy across all Partnership Groups. Progress on this to be reported back at next meeting

**Action Point – John Gorman to report on progress being made**

- John Gorman had circulated the eight strategic priorities to the Group
  - John Gorman had circulated the draft action plan to the Group
  - Task and Finish Groups – some Group members had put their names forward to take part in this work.
  - The names of those on the Task and Finish Groups to be circulated – done
  - Details of the HDU Autism Seminar meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup> had been circulated
  - National Innovation Fund – John Gorman reported that several bids had been proposed from Herefordshire and that two had been put forward. No outcomes were yet known.
  - The Revised National Strategy - a link to the revised Strategy had been circulated
  - Hate Crime – This was to be discussed later in this meeting
  - Safe Places – Lynne Renton was to ask Rose Hunt to ensure that training would be given to staff
- See annex 1
- Social group - This was to be discussed later in this meeting

The Minutes were proposed by Valerie Fitch and seconded by Sylvia Nicholls. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

Before the meeting started there was a short discussion on the use of the Autism Passport in doctors surgeries. Jane Clayton noted that the Royal Society of General Practitioners has an Autism Plan for doctors to follow. Aubrey Baillie noted that NICE Guidance AQ10 was a recommended screening instrument that doctors should be using. Colin Jeavons said that a member of the Local Healthwatch team was on the board of the Taurus Health group (the local GP group) and he could see whether the guidance was being implemented. Michelle Baillon said that she would circulate a hospital passport for those with Autism.

The meeting began by welcoming Debbie Holloway from the Brandon Trust and Jane Wiseman from the Stonham Group.

The meeting then looked at the eight priorities in the Strategy to see what work had been done since the last meeting.

### **Transitions and young people**

Les Knight spoke on Transitions and the provision and services Children's Services have to help people on the autism spectrum. He noted that the current process of 'Statements' for those on the Spectrum was being replaced by Education Health and Care Plans. These would offer a more holistic approach to planning a child's progress through their early years and on into adulthood. The Plans will also allow parents and carers more information to enable them to make better more informed decisions. The Plans are linked to the new 'Local Offer' which will describe in one place all of the services available to children and young people on the spectrum. The Offer is still being developed.

**Action point - Les asked for Group members to access the test webpages on the Council website and to feedback thoughts and suggestions for improvement.** Access the Local Offer pages at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/local-offer/about-the-local-offer>

The NAS has published a guide for young people to help them with their Education Health and Care Plans – for more information click [here](#)

Carole Soble noted that the education and schools element of the Offer were now much better developed than previously and said that she would welcome comments on them.

It was noted that the Local Offer would be a useful resource for those working on the Autism Strategy's priority on Better Information for Parents and Carers to link into.

On Transitions, Les Knight noted that there would be in future a single plan for young people that concentrates on outcomes rather than reports on the past. The plan would also include the views of parents.

There was then a short discussion on what would be available for those who do not quite fit the criteria for help (ie not critical or substantial) and it was agreed that funding is generally an issue. Les Knight noted that the content of the local Offer was not restricted to those with critical or substantial needs only – the information was open and available to anyone to access.

### **Diagnosis pathways**

The meeting noted that there was no representative from the CCG present to discuss their ongoing work on mapping a diagnostic pathway for those with autism.

Colin Jeavons (and others) asked that the CCG be asked to attend future meetings to update the group on progress.

**Action – John Gorman to ask Lynne Renton to attend the next meeting**

Carol Soble informed the meeting about the diagnostic pathway for children

There are three main groups on the pathway;

- Those aged 0 up to 5 where a multi-agency approach to diagnosis is used.
- Those aged 5 to 10 where there is less multi agency work but where there is more paediatric and speech & language support.
- Those aged over 10 where CAMHs take over and use the ADOS diagnostic process.

Les Knight noted that CAMHs now offer a post diagnosis support programme to parents.

There had been an increase in the number of early diagnosis of autism and this was welcomed by the meeting. Les noted that the greater number of early diagnosis that were being made were putting pressure on budgets elsewhere as there were now greater numbers needing help for the transitions processes (going to schools and into adulthood)

**Action Point – John Gorman and Les Knight to discuss how Childrens Wellbeing can identify additional resources to help fill this gap and to get these actions into the Action Plan**

Les also noted that the Pathway described above is still in draft and that it needs to be formally signed off

**Action Point – John Gorman and Les Knight to include actions for the formal sign off of the pathway in the Action Plan**

### **Autism and the Criminal Justice System**

Sgt Gareth King from West Mercia Police spoke to the meeting about the training that officers have received on dealing with Autism and people on the spectrum. All officers had, in 2012, undergone training on autism awareness and this had been followed up by mandatory E-Training. There was then a discussion on the training needs of professionals who come into contact with those on the spectrum. It was agreed that improved training - not just for the Police but for others – should be encouraged.

**Action point – John Gorman to contact the NAS to see if they offer awareness training courses**

## **Housing**

The meeting noted that there was no representative from the Housing Team present to discuss their ongoing work.

*Note – following the meeting the Housing Team contacted John Gorman to apologise for not being at the meeting because of unforeseen circumstances. They have agreed to send a representative to future meetings. Trea Connon from the Housing Team has also drawn up a list of data requirements to help inform a future housing plan. These data requirements will be discussed by John Gorman and Trea before the next meeting.*

## **Information and support for carers and families,**

Valerie Fitch told the group that there had been meetings at Herefordshire Carer Services (HCS) to discuss the information and support needed by families and carers. A task group of volunteer carers has been set up and their first meeting will be October 29.

Aubrey Baillie informed the group that he had been working with Valerie to set up a safe online space using Group Spaces and that he had created a space called; “Autism Friendly Herefordshire” People can join this group and hold private secure conversations on line. The service provides for e-mails, a discussion forum and would be a source of information. There will be two spaces available – one for service users only (aged 18 and over) and one for parents and carers. Rule and protocols on how to use the site will be drawn up.

Anyone wishing to join the group should contact Aubrey at [aubreybaillie@hotmail.com](mailto:aubreybaillie@hotmail.com)

Aubrey also wished to formally thank Valerie for her help with the new site.

Valerie then informed the group that HCS would be holding housing workshops at HCS in November and February 2015. Dates to be provided.

Les Knight informed the group that Children’s Services have a Travel Training service (which covers children and adults) – Dave Magness at the Council is the contact

## **Employment**

Sylvia Nicholls reported that she has met with Stuart Blake of Herefordshire Recruitment to discuss the issues that people on the spectrum have when trying to secure and keep employment.

She said that Stuart was currently looking at trying to identify funding for a package of training with some 1:1 support. Sylvia noted that funding continues to be a problem but that she was optimistic that an employment information service might be able to be set up.

**Action – everyone – to identify feedback from people on the spectrum, and their employers, who have had positive employment experiences**

**Sylvia also asked for volunteers to help with the employment group.**

Les Knight informed Sylvia that Alexia Heath was a useful contact to advise and help with fund raising

## **Hate Crime**

Neville informed the group that the number of recorder incidents of hate crime towards disable people was growing. He said that he could advise those who think that they be been victimised and how to take forward their complaint. He said that he would be happy liaise with the Police and others to assist victims of crime He also said that he was currently working on developing a community resolution to issues whereby for minor or first time instances the victim can influence what sort of penalty or punishment the perpetrator will face

Aubrey Baillie noted that there was online training to help people with Learning Disabilities to deal with Hate Crime and he wondered whether a similar programme could be developed for those on the spectrum. Michelle Baillion wondered whether the NAS have any such resource.

**Action - John Gorman to research what the NAS have regarding hate crime**

**Action - Sylvia Nicholls to raise Hate Crime awareness education with the Hereford and Ludlow College course co-ordinator.**

Les Knight noted that there is an anti-bullying officer in the council and the group said that she should be invited to the next meeting

**Action – Les Knight to invite the anti-bullying Officer to the next meeting**

### **Social Group**

David Malins informed the group that he wished to start up a social group for people on the spectrum. ASPIE Link had previously run such a group but it had stopped working effectively. He told the group that there was an on line form on the ASPIE Link facebook page through which people could express an interest in joining a group – see <http://aspielink.webs.com/becomeamember.htm> He said that the group would welcome guest speakers to their meeting and invited Neville Meredith to speak on Hate Crime.

David informed the meeting that a possible meeting space had been identified in Hereford. He asked the group to inform those who might be interested in such a group to get in touch.

**Action – David Malins to set a date for, and publicise, the first meeting**

### **AOB**

Sylvia Nicholls informed the group that Hereford Disability United would be holding a ‘Market Place’ day on November 26 at the Hinton Community Centre (10.30 to 2.30). The event would cover all aspects of health, housing, benefits, care, employment etc. Sylvia asked that organisation wanting to participate to contact her for more information and to register

Gareth King said that he would have a presence from the Police at the event.

### **Next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be in January - **Action - John Gorman to set January date and future dates.**

Proposed dates for future meetings;

Thursday 15 January 2015

Thursday 16 April 2015

Thursday 16 July 2015

Thursday 15 October 2015

Each meeting to start at 10.30 and end at 12.30

Each meeting to be at the Kindle Centre

## **Annex 1**

### **Safe Places – an update from Rose Hunt Herefordshire Mencap**

Herefordshire Mencap (HM) is now coordinating the 'Safe Places' scheme. It took it over from the council last year (2013). HM had been campaigning on hate crime over the previous 3 years and had a good relationship with W Mercia police so the committee decided to take on the 'Safe Places' scheme

HM organised and paid for the 'I Need Help' cards after receiving some of the costs for them the W Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner. W Mercia police paid for the stickers with the national logo. HM also has a close relationship with ECHO, so it was a group of people from the Ambassadors Project that toured Hereford and the market towns with PCSO Ali Thompson. Ross was 'signed up' by Salter's Hill as this was their main base (another local organisation that HM has worked closely with over the years). This happened on 14 July 2014.

The 'Safe Places' scheme has been designed to offer peace of mind and, if needed, help to people with learning disabilities when they are out on their own. When working well the scheme offers a real sense of independence and freedom. The 'I Need Help' card is given free to everyone with LD that would like one. The card has telephone numbers of two people who can respond immediately to a request for help. It will have the name but not the contact details of the card owner. People working in a safe place venue will be aware of the parameters of their responsibilities. If asked to do more than this, then places will not sign up. Ali, PCSO, will also be visiting the safe places in her role of community support officer when she will check how many people have asked for support and ascertain whether the safe place has any problems. As HM's coordinator, Rose Hunt will also be monitoring the safe places and plans to use the 'mystery shopper' technique to check how the scheme is going.

HM also has contact with 'Our Way' in Kidderminster who launched its scheme in January 2013, W Mercia Police's Diversity Officer working in the Telford area and Adrian Symonds, the recently appointed Diversity Officer for Worcs & Hfdshire. Contacts in Worcestershire have heard about HM and the Herefordshire scheme and have asked for details. HM have also recently heard from Gloucestershire and Warwickshire about their work with safe places.