

Autism Partnership Group - July 14th 2015
Kindle Centre Hereford

Present

Valerie Fitch - Chair	Person on the Autistic Spectrum and Parent
Amanda Leighton	Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Jane Clayton	Parent
Michelle Baillon	Parent
Melanie Kay	Parent
Nikki Pitt	Parent
Colin Boughen	Parent
Keith Bladon	Parent
Sylvia Nicholls	Chair Hereford Disability United (HDU)
Sara Siloko	HDU
Aubrey Baillie	Independent consultant in autism
Christine Price	Healthwatch in place of Colin Javens
Carole Soble	Specialist Teacher for Complex Communication Difficulties
Adrian Symonds	Equality and Diversity Advisor - West Mercia Police
Neville Meredith	Equalities and Diversity
Philippa Winstanley	OT Lead West Locality Team
Cate Johnson	Social Work Team Leader West Locality Team
Claudia Don	Social Worker City Team
Rob Gorle	ACSYL
Gill Gorle	ACSYL
Genevieve Lewis	Hospital Discharge Worker
Ewen Archibald	Commissioning Lead Herefordshire Council
Paul Choppen	Partnership Support Officer Herefordshire Council
John Gorman	Commissioning Officer Herefordshire Council

Apologies;
 Paula Daniels-Symonds
 Chrissy Dunlop
 Rose Hunt
 Richard Green
 Mary Godwin
 Les Knight
 David Malins
 Fenella Lloyd
 Sean Slater
 Rob McAfee
 Richard Elms
 Ian Savage
 Jayne Davis
 Colin Javens
 Helen Boughen
 Mandy Shrimpton

The Minutes from the previous meeting were read through and various actions arising noted. The issue of expenses is to be taken forward to the next meeting.

The minutes were proposed by Sylvia Nicholls and seconded by Aubrey Baillie. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

1) Making Autism a Clinical Priority - Valerie Fitch

Valerie Fitch went through a slide show presentation by Dr Carole Buckley who is the Royal College of GPs Clinical Champion for ASD. Dr Buckley had presented this slideshow at the recent NEC National Autism conference. The slideshow highlighted the importance of making Autism a clinical priority and what work needs to be done.

Key points from the slide show included:

- The role of Primary Care
- The role of the Clinical Commissioning Group
- What the Royal College does
- What the Clinical Priority Programme is and how it can help.

The presentation also covers what people want from their GPs, what experiences they have had and how services might be made better. (A copy of the slide show is attached)

Valerie explained that it would be a positive thing if we were to get a regular representative from the CCG as well as a GP on the Autism Partnership Board. Philippa Winstanley said that she knew a GP who might be interested in attending the meetings.

ACTION – Philippa to follow up with the GP.

ACTION – John to continue to invite the CCG to meetings

Valerie discussed the recently issued statutory guidance issued by the Department of Health. The guidance tells local authorities, NHS bodies and NHS Foundation Trusts what actions should be taken to meet the needs of people with autism living in their area. John Gorman said that copies of the guidance have been circulated to key partners such as the CCG

John and Valerie are trying to arrange Autism Awareness training for GPs.

Sylvia Nicholls suggested holding a seminar on Making Autism a Clinical Priority on the 18 November. Commissioners and people on the Autistic spectrum should be involved

ACTION – all to note date for diary – 18 November. The location will be at the Hinton Community Centre on the Ross Road in Hereford

ACTION – Sylvia, John and Valerie to discuss further the content and attendance of the seminar

2) Gaps in Services for People on the Autistic Spectrum - Cate Johnson and Philippa Winstanley

Cate and Philippa and Claudia Don are social workers within the West Locality and Central Locality Teams and they spoke about the difficulties they have experienced in linking people on the autistic spectrum with local services that support their specialised needs. They often find people with Autism are referred onto services that are primarily aimed at supporting people with Learning Disabilities.

They are currently supporting a range of people aged between 20 and 85 to access services. Philippa also highlighted the physiological effect a late Autistic diagnosis has on a person.

The social worker teams would like to link into the Autism Partnership to help promote the creation of more specialised local Autism services. Currently it appears that only Rainbow Autism in Worcester seems to support group and outreach activities for people on the Autistic spectrum.

There followed a discussion on services in the county. Nikki Pitt mentioned her ideas for a local NAS branch (see AOB). The proposed seminar in November (see above) was also mentioned as a good place to discuss the issue of services.

3) Enhanced Self Advocacy Project - David Malins

David was unable to attend the meeting and so this presentation was deferred until the next meeting of the Board in October.

John Gorman informed the meeting that David wants to create a social / self-advocacy group for people on the Autistic Spectrum. He plans for the group to meet once a month in the Brewery bar of the Barrels pub St Owens Street Hereford. The inaugural meeting will be **Monday August 17**

ACTION – all to note date in diary

ACTION – Sylvia to include details of the meeting on the HDU website

4) Hate Crime - Adrian Symonds

Adrian explained briefly what a Hate Crime was and the various ways it can be reported. He also mentioned the Safe Places scheme run by Mencap.

West Mercia Police have published information on what hate crimes are and what the police can do to help - <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/article/1966/Hate-crime>

He also explained that crimes committed because of someone's alternative lifestyle choices could be treated by police as a Hate Crime although it was not recognised as such in Court. Adrian also talked about how Hate Crime is subjective to the individual concerned whether they are the victim or a witness.

Adrian also said that dozens of Hate Crime or incidents are reported to the West Mercia police each month although it is believed that there is a severe underreporting of such crimes.

There are also a range of ways of reporting hate crimes;

- report it online to True Vision at www.report-it.org.uk
- in an emergency call 999
- for non-emergencies call 101
- call into a police station or stop a police officer in the street
- call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111
- call Victim Support on 0845 30 30 900

More information at <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/article/8915/How-to-report-hate-crime>

Adrian also spoke about the "Safe Places" initiative. A list of Safe Places in Herefordshire is attached.

Living in Fear Report - Neville Meredith

Neville explained that the report detailed a wide range of different experiences of Hate Crimes and the lack of understanding within society of what constitutes a Hate Crime. He explained that parents often see Hate Crime incidences as just bullying.

Neville said anyone who has experienced a Hate Crime can ring him as well as the police. He also mentioned that he wanted to restart up the Conditional Caution scheme with backing from the MP for Hereford Jesse Norman. The scheme enables a victim to meet the offender and explain why they felt victimised. In the cases of a first offence the victim can decide whether to press for a prosecution or

offer a conditional caution. The idea of this procedure is to put power back into the hands of the victim.

ACTION - Neville to draft a letter to Jesse Norman. Draft to be sent to Valerie for signature on behalf of the Partnership Group

ACTION – John Gorman to contact the NAS to get some contact details of other Autism Partnership groups to see if they would like to join in with this work

Neville also mentioned the “Safe Here” Project. He project has involved the Police and the Street Pastors working in conjunction with the management of the Old Market Shopping Centre to make sure it is a safe place to shop. All staff working on site have been trained to deal with sign of distress or a Hate Crime.

He also described the “Safer Taxis” scheme where a local cab company - County Cabs - have agreed to transport distressed persons home or to a safe place for free (they may however ask for the fare at a later time)

LIAG

Valerie Fitch informed the meeting that she has recently joined the board of the Local Independent Advisory Group (LIAG) which has been set up to act as a link between the Police and the Community.

The key aim of the group is to improve the quality of policing for diverse communities. It will do this by building a relationship between the police force and its diverse communities and groups based upon: disability, age, religion, beliefs, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, culture, lifestyles and any other factors. It will also constructively advise and challenge the police on their policies, procedures and practices, and advise the police as to how they might enhance these key areas to improve their policing performance.

The meeting agreed that this will be a useful link for the Autism Group in future.

5) Updating Action Plan

John Gorman explained that the plan is in a constant state of development and it needs to be updated on an on-going basis. He went through the current version of the Action Plan and asked for updates to be sent to him. (Current draft version attached)

ACTION – John to update the latest draft of the plan and to circulate for comments and amendments.

6) Autism Conference NEC- Valerie Fitch

The event provided parents, carers and professionals across the Midlands with the latest information, advice, products and services on the condition

Valerie said that there is an underrepresentation of women being diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum. The accepted ratio of males to females has been 9 to 1. Recent research has indicated that the ratio is more likely to 6 males to 4 females. It is thought that this under reporting has been cause in part by the ability of girls to not stand out and to be accepted by their peers. They are also less likely it seems to report to being bullied.

Autism Connect- Aubrey Baillie

Aubrey also attended the NEC event and he spoke about the new social media platform for people on the Autistic Spectrum Autism Connects. The platform enables you to create a personal profile, search and follow people locally, create support networks and rate and review local providers. Aubrey would like to get 20 Autistic people in the county signed up to the site within the next month.

The website is www.autism-conects.org.uk

ACTION – everyone to investigate the social network and to encourage others to join it

Attached - Autism Conference report from Aubrey Baillie & Valerie Fitch

7) A.O.B.

a) Hereford NAS Branch

Nikki Pitt informed the meeting that she was in the process of setting up a Hereford Branch of the National Autism Society. An initial meeting will be on July 15. If anyone is interested in playing a part in the running of this important group please let Nikki know.

ACTION – expressions of interest to Nikki at nikkijpitt@hotmail.com

b) ACSYL - Rob Gorle introduced his organisation called ACSYL.

The web address is <http://www.acsyl.co.uk/>

The following is taken from the ACSYL website;

“ACSYL builds support networks for people who are isolated by disability, mental health challenges or some other factor.

We offer the following benefits to families:

- *Planning: assistance in drawing up a family-led plan to ensure the on-going well-being of vulnerable family members.*
- *Support: assistance from a Community Connector to set up a circle of support for their vulnerable member, plus on-going support to maintain the circle as the person's needs and aspirations change throughout their lifetime.*
- *Advocacy: ensuring that there are sufficient records in place, and that there are suitable people in the vulnerable person's support network, to enable strong advocacy on their behalf when necessary.*
- *Information on local provisions, legal and financial matters to ensure the whole family's long-term security and well-being.*

Membership is open to any family that has one or more vulnerable member, whether or not they receive services from their Local Authority.”

For more information visit the ACSYL website at <http://www.acsyl.co.uk/>

c) Sara Soloko recommended a social website which describes the visit of the new Minister for Community and Social Care, Alistair Burt MP, to The National Autistic Society's (NAS) Linden House service in Godalming Surrey.

More at <https://socialcare.blog.gov.uk/2015/07/09/improving-our-understanding-of-autism/>

d) **Rural Media** - Aubrey Baillie gave a short update from Richard Elms at Rural Media on the work they are currently doing to develop awareness of autism (Richard's report is attached). Richard will report back at the next meeting in October but in the meantime the main thing that he needs from members of the Autism Partnership Board are contacts and referrals to service providers who would be willing to regularly review film content made by people on the spectrum and their Carers.

ACTION POINT – if you have names or contacts please pass them to John Gorman who will pass them to Richard

e) The Council are launching a new advice information and signposting website. John Gorman asked for volunteers to test the pages as they become available – testing is expected to start in August

ACTION POINT – those interested in volunteering to let John Gorman know

f) John Gorman asked the group to review and amend the Terms of Reference for the Autism Partnership Group (current terms of reference attached)

ACTION POINT – comments and amendments to be sent to John Gorman

The meeting closed at 12.45

The next meeting will take place on 13th October, 10am-12:30pm at the Kindle Centre