**Autism Partnership Board**

**11/07/17**

10am-1pm, Fownhope and Mordiford Rooms, Plough Lane, Hereford

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| **Attendees** | **Role/ Organisation** |
| Valerie Fitch (Chair) | Parent |
| Debbie Hobbs | NAS Herefordshire |
| Abi North | NAS Herefordshire |
| Rob Gorle | ACSYL |
| Gill Gorle | ACSYL |
| Aubrey Bailey | Autism Consultant |
| Greg Atherton | West Mercia Police |
| Nikki Pitt | Parent |
| Sara Siloko | Herefordshire Disability United |
| Christine Price | Healthwatch |
| Mary Simpson | Healthwatch |
| Amy Davies | 2gether Trust |
| Carla Preston (part of meeting) | Herefordshire Council |
| Neville Meredith (from 11am) | Herefordshire Council |
| John Gorman | Herefordshire Council |
| Paul Choppen | Herefordshire Council |
| Liz Staunton | Herefordshire Council |
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| **Apologies** | **Role/ Organisation** |
| Helen Young | Parent |
| Sylvia Nicholls | Hereford Disability United |
| Sean Slater | 2gether Trust |
| Carly Day | NAS |
| Alan Harrison | Person on the Autistic Spectrum |
| Genevieve Lewis | Parent |
| Rosie Wooderson | Score |
| Laura Tyler | Herefordshire Council |
| Cllr Swinglehurst | Herefordshire Council |
| Adrian Simmonds | West Mercia Police |
| Paula Daniels Simmonds | Parent |

**Introductions, Apologies, Previous Minutes**

Valerie welcomed everyone and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

John read out the apologies and recapped the previous minutes.

**Matters Arising;**

**Carers Strategy** – Carla informed the group that a carer review group has been set up to co-produce a new service for carers which will go out to tender later this year.  The plan is that a new contract will be in place when the existing contracts finish at the end of March 2018.

The minutes were proposed and seconded by Aubrey and Debbie.

**LIAG**-**Greg Atherton- West Mercia Police**

Greg informed the group that Hate Crime offences and incidents recordings were up 74% from last year (April-April). Within these figures were 10 offences in relation to disability (up from 7 the previous year).

Greg also told the group about the Herbert Protocol. The Protocol asks the next of kin of vulnerable people to compile useful information about that person in the event the vulnerable person goes missing. This information can be things such as phone numbers, medication, photographs and places where, if they had previously gone missing, they had been found.

Greg also informed the group about the Code of Arrest which means that the Police don’t arrest a person if other options are more appropriate.

Greg said West Mercia Police were drawing up new risk assessment plans to look at what support is needed for the victims of Hate Crimes.

Valerie said she had two more sessions left of her Police Officer training. She has been training new recruits on Autism Awareness

**ACSYL – A circle surrounding you for life**

Rob and Gill Gorle told the meeting about the work they do with ACSYL. Their aim is to connect people at risk of being isolated, back into society by creating a small circle of long term friendships and connections.

ACSYL is particularly keen on ensuring that vulnerable people have a voice and they have been working with VoiceAbility who specialise in giving people with Learning Disabilities a voice. ACSYL recently attended a workshop run by VoiceAbility which explored different ways of communication and the use of technology.

Some of the work that VoiceAbility has done has shown that disempowered people will often answer questions in the way they think the questioner wants to hear - not what they themselves actually mean. Different questioning techniques are needed when dealing with people who have a learning disability or who are on the autistic spectrum. Rob also noted that IT is a very important tool to help people with autism to communicate.

More information about VoiceAbility can be found here <https://www.voiceability.org/>

More information about ACSYL can be found here <http://www.acsyl.co.uk/>

A copy of Rob and Gill’s presentation is also attached to the electronic version of these minutes

**NAS update**

Debbie informed the group that the local NAS branch had been very busy that and that the Fred Bulmer Foundation had recently agreed to extend their lease on their office space for another year.

She said that there is also an adult night club for people with autism being set up at the Venue in Hereford – details to follow.

Debbie also informed the group about a new National NAS campaign called ‘Autism Hour’ which will happen during the week commencing October 2nd 2017. The aim of this campaign is to get local stores and shops to be especially autism friendly (lowered lighting, no music etc) for an hour. Staff will also be trained in autism.

Debbie said that local Co-Ops are currently ensuring that their staff are trained in autism awareness.

More information on Autism Hour can be found at [www.autism.org.uk/autismhour](http://www.autism.org.uk/autismhour)

Debbie also said that the Mayor of Hereford is very keen to ensure that all councillors and members receive autism awareness training.

The “What is Autism?” event which Debbie told us about last time is also going forward during Autism Awareness week (which starts on 26 March 2018) at the Arts College in Hereford. If anyone would like to book a stall to exhibit at the event please contact Debbie at [nas.herefordshire@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas.herefordshire@nas.org.uk)

A copy of the NAS update is also attached to the electronic version of these minutes

**Healthwatch**

Christine Price spoke to the meeting about Healthwatch Hereford. She explained that locally Healthwatch has changed how they are set up and that they are now a limited company with new directors.

Their contract with Herefordshire Council has also changed meaning that they will now focus on involving the public more in their work and getting out into all areas of the county to gather people’s views

Healthwatch also now have a company membership scheme, a stakeholder reference group and are looking for Healthwatch locality champions around the county.

For more information, the Healthwatch Herefordshire website can be found here <http://www.healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk/>

Healthwatch Herefordshire have recently run an online survey and held eighteen engagement events across the county. They also held their AGM on July 4th. As a result of this engagement work the following topics have been selected for the 2017/18 Healthwatch workplan;

- Social care assessments & the new pathway for adult social care services

- Public Health including healthy lifestyles and prevention services

- A&E

- Access to GP Services

- Complex and multiple conditions and coordination of services.

- Palliative Care: giving people a choice of treatment for terminal conditions and choosing where to die

Christine ended her talk by asking some questions;

- Do you want to be involved in any aspects of the work of Healthwatch?

- Do you have any suggestions to us about our work for the future?

- Do you want to join our mailing list?

- Would you like to be a locality champion?

If anyone does want to become more involved please email Healthwatch at [info@healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk)

A copy of Christine’s presentation is attached to the electronic version of these minutes

**Prevent- Neville Meredith**

Neville gave the board a brief run-through of a WRAP (Workshop Raising Awareness of Prevent) session on Prevent. Prevent is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the Government’s counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It has three specific strategic objectives:

• To respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced from those who promote it.

• To prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support.

• To work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that need to be addressed.

Neville explained that people who want to radicalise others generally use a ‘single narrative approach’ which has three steps;

• A Doomsday Scenario; ‘our way of life / belief structure is under threat’

• A Moral Obligation to act; ‘you are morally obliged to do something’

• A Need to Act; ‘now take those actions’

Neville noted that people on the Autistic Spectrum can be susceptible to this type of indoctrination.

People who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism can be referred to ‘Channel’.

Channel is comprised of different agencies including the police and local authority. The three key stages of Channel are:

• Identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism;

• Assess the nature and extent of that risk; and

• Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned

Neville said there had been around 30 people since 2015 in Herefordshire have been referred to Channel but that 19 of these cases were not taken any further. Neville also mentioned that in October the Home Office is going to report on how much mental health illness plays a part in radicalisation. He is also working on an autism specific WRAP presentation which he will present to the Board later this year.

**Autism Strategy Update - John Gorman**

John told the Board the Autism Strategy will be refreshed by the end of the year. The identified priorities are:

* Keeping healthy
* Education
* Support for unpaid carers and Families
* Housing, Employment & Transport
* Being Safe

A copy of the priorities is attached to the electronic version of these minutes

A questionnaire has been drawn up and is available for people to comment on the draft priorities.

It is also available on line on the NAS website at

<https://goo.gl/forms/Y52xTd6166iBwiIt1> *Thanks to NAS for hosting the questionnaire.*

The online questionnaire can also be accessed via the HDU, HCS, Healthwatch and Council websites. *Thanks to our partners for linking to this questionnaire.*

The questionnaire aims to make sure we have the right priorities. So far there have been 45 online responses and a dozen written responses.

A copy of the questionnaire is attached to the electronic version of these minutes

**The deadline for responses is the end of July 2017.**

The draft priorities have also been sent to various key partners such as the CCG, Healthwatch, Herefordshire carers and 2gether for comment

**Self-Assessment**

John also reported that the report from last year’s Autism self-assessment has been published by Public Health England. The report is very detailed however it does not easily allow comparisons of one area against another.

A copy of the report is attached to the electronic version of these minutes

**AOB**

**Diagnosis**

Aubrey asked that the NICE diagnosis guidance be re- circulated.

These are attached to the electronic version of these minutes

There was a discussion about the current position regarding the diagnosis pathway. It is understood that discussions are currently taking place between the CCG and 2gether about setting up a pathway. This might mean a continuation of requiring people to go to Bristol or Birmingham for assessment.

The Board wondered whether there should be some work done on identifying a local solution perhaps by setting up a framework of locally based qualified persons to carry out diagnostic assessments. This could build on Dr Simon Lennane’s idea of training up some GPs as local diagnostic experts. It was thought that this could be more cost effective and involve less travelling for people.

Another idea might be to follow the local STP (Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships) footprint that local councils and the NHS are working on and to set up a joint service with Worcestershire.

Aubrey made the point that in his experience, diagnostic assessments are most effective when done by professionals who have a link to culture of autism either through their work or by having friends who are autistic.

Nikki Pitt said that we need to empower people to ask for a diagnosis.

The meeting suggested that a meeting be organised with key partners to discuss where we are regarding the diagnostic pathway and see whether the Board can influence the diagnostic model that is chosen.

The meeting to include (if possible); CCG, 2gether, Childrens Well Being, Healthwatch, NAS Hereford, Dr Simon Lennane, Board members.

**Action – John Gorman to set up meeting**

**Carly Day**

Carly had sent a summary of how she can support local people with autism. She has offered to speak to the board at a future meeting.

A copy of her paper is attached to the electronic version of these minutes

The meeting ended at 1pm

**Next meetings**

Tuesday the 17th of October, Plough Lane 10-1pm

Tuesday the 23rd of January 2018, Plough Lane 10-1pm

**Attachments;**

ACSYL Presentation

NAS Update

Healthwatch presentation

Draft strategy priorities

Autism questionnaire

Self-assessment report

NICE document; who can diagnose

NICE document; an outline pathway

Carly Day paper