

Autism Partnership Board

24 April 2018

10am-1pm, Hereford and Leominster Room, Plough Lane, Hereford

Attendees	Role/ Organisation
Nikki Pitt	Chair / Parent / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Valerie Fitch	Parent / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Alan Harrison	Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Debbie Hobbs	NAS Herefordshire
Rob Gorle	ACSYL
Gill Gorle	ACSYL
Mary Simpson	Healthwatch
Lisa Masters	Occupational Therapist
Alexia Heath	Herefordshire Council
Neville Meredith	Herefordshire Council
Dave Tristram	Herefordshire Council
John Gorman	Herefordshire Council
Paul Choppen	Herefordshire Council

Apologies	Role/ Organisation
Paula Daniels Simmonds	Parent
Rhaine Green	NAS West Midlands
Aubrey Baillie	Autism Consultant
Helen Young	
Michelle Baillon	Parent
Les Knight	Herefordshire Council
Cllr Rone	Herefordshire Council
Laura Tyler	Herefordshire Council

Introductions, Apologies and Previous Minutes

The new Chair, Nikki Pitt opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves. John then went through the previous minutes.

Nikki thanked the outgoing Chair, Valerie Fitch, for her work over the past few years in leading the Board as well as running various working groups. Nikki also mentioned Valerie's ongoing work in raising awareness with the Police, GPs and others.

The meeting also expressed their thanks for Valerie's contribution to the development and success of the Board.

Matters Arising and Previous Minutes - Outstanding Actions:

Access Social Services the New Blue Print document - this is still in draft and has not been issued by Stephen Vickers.

Mary to ask Mental Health forum about autism specific services and get examples from elsewhere – Mary said that the comment about a lack of services appeared to have come from someone who has been diagnosed in Bristol and who had seen the range of services available there and they were commenting upon the fact that there are fewer services in Herefordshire. They had not specified what services would be useful to them. Lisa Masters said the Board should look at the services Powys are offering in Wales as the county has a similar spatially separated demographic to Herefordshire.

Cllr Rone offered to write to Alan with information on autism services - still outstanding

Today's agenda;

Funding Opportunities - Dave Tristram, Project Development Officer Voluntary and Community Sector, Economy, Communities & Corporate

Dave introduced himself and gave an overview of his teams work. He explained that his team helps find funding opportunities for businesses.

He explained that funding is available through around 80 different channels such as:

- The Big Lottery Fund
- Community Foundation
- Hereford City Council
- Awards for All

Applications for funding have to be made by a group such as a charity or through a collective investment scheme. Match funding may be needed in some cases.

A recent example of the work of the Development team can be seen at the Garway Community Hall. This new village opened in April includes a health and social care outreach centre, café and a modern hall and meeting facility.

For further information about how to access funding opportunities please contact Dave on dtristram@herefordshire.gov.uk or telephone him on 01432 260636.

Working with the Employment Service

Francis Beirne from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) introduced himself. He works as a Community Partner (there are three Community Partners for West Mercia). Their job is to upskill staff (known as work coaches) in job centres helping them to better understand the needs of their customers, especially those with additional needs.

Francis said that there a Small Employer Advisor working in jobcentres whose job it was to liaise with Small Employers (those with less than 25 employees) advising them on taking on people with additional or different needs.

Francis also said that work coaches are currently receiving training on autism awareness.

Francis then told the meeting about Universal Credit which will be rolled out for new claims in Herefordshire from September 2018.

Universal Credit will mostly be available online and additional computers are being fitted into Job centres for people to access the system. Local authorities (including Herefordshire) are also providing additional support (paid for by central government).

Alexia Heath said that she was helping to put together a Digital Strategy which will identify gaps in on line provision and people's skills so these can be addressed. She said that she would be asking the Board in the near future about engaging with people with Autism on what help they might need to access services such as Universal Credit on line.

Universal Credit will be more simple system of payments. It takes the place of six other benefits and rolls them into one monthly payment. It will be flexible and changes to amounts paid to claimants will be changed quickly depending on changing needs and circumstances.

For more on Universal Credit go to <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

Francis also mentioned;

Access to Work which helps you get help at work if you're disabled or have a health condition – see <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work> and

The Work and Health Programme which helps you find and keep a job if you're out of work – see <https://www.gov.uk/work-health-programme>

He also spoke about Therapeutic Earnings (also called Prescribed Work) where if a doctor thinks that a person would benefit mentally from working they can be allowed to earn up to £100 a week without affecting their benefits.

The meeting discussed the need for all staff dealing with people with autism to be better trained in autism awareness. It was also agreed that different innovative ways of engaging with employers (especially small employers) were needed.

Strategy progress

John reported that the strategy was progressing through the Council's and CCG's approval processes.

He thanked the members of the board who had attended the additional strategy meeting on March 9 which had helped reshape the strategy document. The strategy has also been to the Adult Well Being Management Board and the Childrens Scrutiny Committee both of which had suggested some further changes to the strategy.

It is expected that the document will go to Cabinet on June 7.

Nikki then discussed the future work and direction of the Board. She noted that the Scrutiny Committee had welcomed the idea of the Board reviewing progress made in delivering the Strategy. Nikki and John have been working on a draft work plan for the Board. This will be issued for comment when ready.

Action – John to circulate draft

Nikki wanted to know what the meeting thought about three key themes;

- How it monitor progress made in delivering the action plan
- How will the Board deliver the targets that have been assigned to the Board
- What the structure of future meetings will be

Valerie suggested that there should be an action plan taskforce (separate to the Board) who would meet and ask those responsible for delivering actions to report on progress. The task force would then report to the Board at each meeting.

Alexia said that she would find it helpful to have a named member of the Board asking her to report on progress and to attend meetings with her. Nikki said that she would be happy to be part of the on-going work on employment opportunities that Alexia is working on.

Lisa Masters said that she would be happy to help /advise on training issues

Nikki said the taskforce is good idea as it would help keep pressure on partners to report on progress. She added that there may be task and finish groups below the taskforce to look at specific topics and to review current provision.

Lisa suggested that task and finish groups could also benchmark other areas (such as Powys) to see what they do.

The meeting noted that baseline data is needed in order to measure progress. Debbie Hobbs said that from 1 April this year GPs have had to record whether someone is autistic on their records. This will help generate data for future use.

Alan Harrison asked about the role of the board. It was agreed that it should aim to increase awareness, spread the word about autism and encourage people and companies to make reasonable adjustments to help people with autism. Rob Gorle made the point that we could not monitor progress at an individual person level, it would have to be monitored at a partner level.

Valerie said that the Terms of Reference for the board need to be amended to reflect recent changes. **Action; John to update and recirculate the Terms of Reference**

Nikki thanked everyone for their thoughts about the future work of the board.

NAS Update- Debbie Hobbs

On May 22nd there will be a Quiet Time at Hereford Cathedral from 9am-10am. The staff at Hereford cathedral have recently received autism awareness training.

Debbie has also spoken to the ASPIE group at Hereford Sixth Form College about getting staff autism awareness training.

You can now download "Social Stories" from the NAS website at <http://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx>

Social Stories are short descriptions of a particular situation, event or activity, which include specific information about what someone with autism can expect in that situation and why.

Herefordshire NAS need a gardener for a Sensory garden at the Saxon Hall. Please email Debbie Hobbs for more detail on NAS.Herefordshire@nas.org.uk.

Valerie said that footfall at the What is Autism? Day on March 29th at the Saxon Hall had been fantastic. There had been a number of interesting speakers and opportunities for people to get information on services and events.

A.O.B

Neville Meredith reported that on the last Friday in September (the 28th) there will be an event called "Everyone is Someone". The meeting will discuss issues Hate Crime and what can be done about it. The group will likely to meet at the Kindle Centre in Hereford from 10am-3pm (to be confirmed).

Please contact Neville Meredith on nmeredith@herefordshire.gov.uk or 01432 383628 for more details.

Healthwatch- Mary Simpson informed the board that she was looking for feedback from people who have recently gone through the strength based, adult social care assessment. Please email Mary on mary@healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk for more details.

GDPR - John informed the group about the General Data Protection Regulation that will come in to effect soon. To comply with the new regulation a round robin will be sent all board members asking them whether they want to continue receiving emails about the Autism Partnership Board.

Action- Paul and John to send email round to board members to confirm membership status.

Next meetings

Please note the change of venue to both the July 24th and October 30th meetings

24th July 2018 -10-1pm, Small Hall, Saxon Hall, Hoarwithy Road, Hereford HR2 6HE

30th of October 2018- 10-1pm, Council Chamber, Hereford Town Hall
10 St Owen Street, Hereford, HR1 2SP

22nd January 2019 10-12:30pm, Hereford and Leominster Room, Herefordshire Council
Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford