

**Autism Partnership Meeting**

07/06/22 at 10:30-12:30pm

<b>Attendees</b>	
Name	Role
Valerie Fitch	Chair / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Laura Ferguson	Vice Chair/ ADASS
Bernadette Louise	Autism Champion for Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Paul Choppen	Partnership Board Assistant, Herefordshire Council
Richard Keble	ICS
Lisa Masters	Independent Occupational Therapist
Jenny Dalloway	Programme Director for Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Autism, CCG
Richard Clark	Senior Social Worker, Young Adults Transition Team, Herefordshire Council
Anna Wainwright	HVOSS & All Sorts
Les Knight	Herefordshire Council

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<b>Apologies</b>	
Name	Role
Gill Gorle	ACSYLE
Rob Gorle	ACSYLE
John Gorman	Herefordshire Council
Carolyn Whippman	Herefordshire Council
Debbie Hobbs	Parent Carer Voice, Herefordshire and Worcestershire NAS
James Baker	Hereford Make /Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Alexia Health	Herefordshire Council

**Introductions**
**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

Valerie asked members if they had a conflict of interest to declare which no one did.

**Minutes from Previous**

Name	Actions	Update
Richard	Action 1	Richard to look into getting the text changed in the second GP Autism Training Video from equal opportunity of access to equitable term of access.
		Valerie informed the group that after James and Richard had a conversation after the previous meeting and it was decided the text did not need to be amended.

Valerie	Action 2	To send the Taskforce feedback on the Joint Autism Strategy Priority discussions for forwarding.	Valerie has sent this out and this will be sent out with the minutes
	Action 4	Valerie will discuss her findings on the Autism Terminology with Bernadette and Richard and decide on the next steps; and send these to Paul for circulation.	Action 1: Valerie will ask Paul to send this out. After briefing Bernadette on the Terminology feedback, Bernadette said she uses Autism Spectrum Disorder as that is what stated in the DSM5 ( Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition)
Laura	Action 3	Laura to invite board members to a workshop on the important issues for inclusion in the Joint Autism Strategy. Laura will confirm details on the workshop in due course.	This action is still on going. Carolyn Whippman has replaced Laura Ferguson as Senior Commissioning Officer within the Community Wellbeing Directorate.
	Action 5	Laura to pass on Ewen Archibald's contact details who is leading on the Prevent agenda to Valerie so she can contact him to invite him to the meetings she has with the Police.	Laura passed on Ewen's details to Valerie

### Meeting and Matters Arising

Laura's change of role-Laura explained that she had left her post of Senior Commissioning Officer within the Adult Wellbeing Directorate at Herefordshire Council. She has taken up a role as a ADASS associate within the West Midlands. Laura would like to be part of the Autism Partnership in an independent capacity.

Valerie subsequently put Laura forward as Vice Chair of the Autism Partnership Board and asked members if they had any objections. No objections were raised.

Adult Diagnostic Pathway-Jenny updated the group with regards to the current situation regarding the autism support service and adult diagnostic pathway.

The procurement for the support service has been completed and the contract has been awarded to Autism West Midlands on a 2 year contract with the option to extend it for an additional 2 years. They are intending to subcontract and work with Brightfire with the service commencing at the beginning of July. Final details of the contract are being decided and Jenny will update the board on this in due course.

Re-procurement of the diagnostic service-The procurement process has been halted due to an increase in demand and subsequently the specification that had been put out to the market is no

longer valid. The current service with the Family Psychologists will continue with the current contract being extended for another year while the reason for the increase in demand is investigated. They hope to have a new contract in place by April 2023. Additional funding has been identified to help with the increase in demand and hence assessments needing to take place this year.

Jenny will discuss with Valerie the best way the CCG can consult with the Autism Partnership on what a future diagnostic service should look like.

Autism Dashboard-Jenny said that the CCG receives one off data along with monthly reports from the service and they have intimated that they are happy to share some of this data with the board. This will be finalised once the procurement has been completed.

Base for the Diagnostic service in Hereford-Jenny said they are getting into conversation around a base in Hereford now they have decided to extend the diagnostic service for a year.

### SEND Update-Les Knight

*Roll out of the Autism Education Trust training to Schools-* Les said the Autism Training for Schools which is being delivered by the City of Birmingham Complex Communication Team and was recommended by the All-party parliamentary committee to the government although as yet the training has not be rolled out nationally. The training provides autism awareness and classroom strategy training for practitioners in schools

So far at the end of year 2/3 40+ out of 100 schools have either received the training or having confirmed booking for the training. 22 school leaders are currently booked onto the leadership training which could potentially result in over 60+ schools signed up to receive the training . Les hope he can push more schools to sign up in the final formal year of the programme.

### **Action 1-Bernadette asked Les to sort figures for the type of staff attending the training.**

*Working with the social care Academy-*Les said there is work being done to offer autism awareness training to social care workers and family support workers working within children services. By next year there will be autism awareness training included within the training programme for social workers.

Bernadette did mention that social workers who are signed up with BASW will receive some autism training and that autism training is included in the Oliver McGowan Training.

*Education Provision for different parts of the autism population in schools-* Discussion are being had with a working group and NAS regarding provision for around 15-20 autistic secondary age pupils with anxiety associated with their autism who may benefit from a specialist provision in a low stress environment. The provision will be run as a hub by the management of another school. They are currently trying to find suitable accommodation from Council stock.

A discussion ensued about the need to make sure the area around the hub fitted the sensory needs of the autistic individuals as well as the building themselves and not to rule out building that were not education facilities by could be adapted to suit the pupils needs.

### **Action 2 -Laura said she knew of two council owned farm houses on the outskirts of Herefordshire that may be suitable and would forward the details to Les.**

## Draft Joint Autism Strategy

Valerie, Bernadette, Carolyn will be meeting with Laura Westwood and Emma Allen from Worcestershire County Council to work on the Joint Autism Strategy on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June at the Cube in Malvern.

They plan to discuss who will be the leads for each of the priority areas including where these leads will work across both counties.

## ICS updates-Bernadette Louise

Bernadette discussed how she attends the Regional Autism Steering Group whose chair Lesley Kilshaw attends and feeds back from the National Autism Steering Group on update with regards to the work streams.

## National Autism Steering Group Updates and points of interest

*Work Stream 1- Improving Access and quality of Autism Diagnosis including pre and post assessment support-* Bernadette said the wording pre and post assessment support rather than diagnostic support was a deliberate decision to make sure individuals who did not meet the threshold for an autism diagnosis still received some support.

Neurodevelopment services to be brought together for adults as they are for children and young people. Bernadette has shared her thoughts with Jenny Dalloway on this that are in summary that a person should not have to go through various pathways to get their neurodivergence accepted.

*Work stream 2 -Health Inequalities-* the Annual Health Checks for autistic people are now being rolled as a pilot in Newcastle.

*Work Stream 3-Improving the Quality of Mental Health Treatment and Support-*a special interests group is going to evaluate the impact of sensory friendly environments in inpatient units.

Reading University are developing an app that can identify sensory issues.

Workforce Group- They are scoping the location of specialist autism teams and identifying the training and workforce needs of specialist autism needs.

SEND and Alternative Provision government green paper-identified the website for consultation which closes on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. The proposal that there is a single system for SEND rather than it being fragmented. Alternative provision is now on equal footing to special education and needs provision.

National Autism Research Strategy-is focused on fit for purpose services and developing evidence based practise.

## Regional Autism Steering Group Updates-

Each regional steering group meeting has a focus group based on a particular interest with the last one being on the Voluntary and Non Statutory Sector with presentations from groups such as Autism West Midlands and Derbyshire Autism Services. Conversation was mostly on the pressure on autism services due to lack of capacity versus the number of people in need of help. Funding is fragmented and too project orientated there is very little stability especially when having to serve the needs of people that are not being met by statutory services.

Bernadette thought we should have some local focus groups especially looking at how the charitable sector can be best utilised and their problems worked through and helped through commissioning and fulfilling the aims of the autism strategy.

Developing Services for the Autistic People Programme Board- Bernadette also gave updates on behalf of Richard Keble as follows:

*Oliver McGowan Training-* 23 people across health and social care have received one off tier 2 pilot Oliver McGowan training which was delivered by the national autistic society in May. The Oliver McGowan mandatory training and evaluation are nearly complete. The training has been made mandatory in the Health and Social Care Act 2022.

A code of practise is being developed by the Department of Health and Social Care and details are to follow about the national roll out.

*Sensory Friendly Environments Primary Care-* educational videos have now been released. 10/79 GP practices have signed up for assessment with 8 have been completed and recommendations have been sent out to the practice, the aim is to have 20 GP practices on board by March 2023.

*Low Stimulus Environments for Mental Health in Inpatient Wards-* Hillcrest Ward in Redditch is the pilot sight with the assessment undertaken over the next few months. Autistic patient identified to co-produce the assessment and all mental health occupational therapists booked onto and starting social integration training.

*14-18 year old Post Diagnostic Support-* The contacts has been awarded to Brain in Hand which was the support app and Autism West Midlands for the face to face support. Contracts commenced on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May for a nine month period. Targeted contacts for Autism West midlands is 100, 80 for Worcestershire and 20 for Herefordshire, 80 of these are expected to receive follow up support and 30 to attend a autism confidence course. The targeted contacts for Brain in Hand are 65, 45 for Worcestershire and 20 for Herefordshire. It has been agreed that the University of Gloucestershire will review the pilots.

Bernadette received a complaint about the co-production from Worcestershire Children First around their SEND Plans.

She had also received a complaint around the type of language used in an advert for a job within Children First. If anyone has any similar complains please let Bernadette know.

Bernadette as Autism Champion has been sitting on interview panels for the All-age Disability Strategy in Worcestershire and would like to be doing similar in Herefordshire.

The LeDeR programme is now including autistic people in their mortality reviews. Videos been commissioned by Reflections who did the Sensory Friendly Environment videos around the inclusion of autistic people in the LeDeR reviews which Bernadette will be participating in.

Bernadette will be going to the joint board meeting tomorrow of Herefordshire's and Worcestershire's local HealthWatch organisations.

As part of improving the provision for people with sensory needs in GP practices Hereford Medical Group is now become involved. Valerie will be doing an assessment with them on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July as well as working with them to address some complaints around the matter.

Bernadette mentioned she has asked Richard Keble to look whether work needs to be done on separate training videos for staff about emotional dysregulation and high anxiety as it was only briefly covered in training videos on being autistic.

### Sector Updates

TASP-Abigail mentioned that the group had changed what its initials stand for from The Autism Support People to The Alternative Support People in order to be more inclusive of individuals with other issues.

Valerie suggested Abigail contact Talk Community about being listed on their directory.

**Action 3- She also asked Paul to forward Bernadette's email address onto Abigail so they can liaise.**

### Police reports

Valerie said there was no new autistic cases that she has been made aware of since the last board meeting. She also discussed how she attended a 1 hour session by West Mercia Police on when and how to use a Taser followed by training videos.

Valerie also plans to do training sessions with Victims Support with all of their employees. Victim Support have also created a new easy read leaflet for autistic victims.

The IAG are looking for more people to join. They are especially short of female members.

Police Autism Training-Valerie mentioned that autism training for the police is not mandatory and Bernadette raised concerns about their lack of implementing reasonable adjustments for autistic individuals under arrest.

Valerie has also had conversations with West Mercia deputy police commissioner about attending a future meeting.

### A.O.B.

Learning Disability Week-Paul mentioned that the event was on from June 20<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June and there various events going on across the county. John had raised prior to the meeting that we need to get on planning next year's Autism Awareness Week earlier to have a similar scope.

LeDeR-Laura raised that with autism now being included within the LeDeR programme that we should ask Rachael Skinner to attend a future meeting to discuss the referral numbers, type of referrals, and whether there is enough information to encourage mortality referrals of autistic individuals.

### **Next Meeting and subject-any agenda items please email Valerie**

The next Autism Partnership Meeting is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August from 10:30am -12:30pm via Zoom. Joining details will be sent out in due course.

Actions		
Les Knight	Action 1	To sort figures for the type of staff attending the Autism Education Trust Training.
Laura Ferguson	Action 2	Laura to forward to Les the details of the two council owned farm houses on the outskirts of Herefordshire that may be suitable for the provision of secondary age autistic individuals with anxiety issues.
Paul Choppen	Action 3	To forward Bernadette's email address onto Abigail North so they can liaise