

Autism Partnership Meeting

04/07/23 at 1pm – 3:30 p.m.

Venue: Fownhope Room, Plough Lane Offices & Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Name	Role
Valerie Fitch	Chair / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Paul Choppen	Partnership Board Assistant, Herefordshire Council
Laura Ferguson	ADASS, Vice Chair, Parent of Autistic Adult
John Burgess	Senior Commissioning Officers, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council
Emma Kelly	Commissioning Officer, SEND Market Development and Engagement, Community Wellbeing
Sally Wilson	Head of Care Commissioning, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council
Zoe Cotterell	CarerLinks Team Manager
Anna Swift	Children and Young People Autism Lead, (NHS HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE ICB - 18C)
John Gorman	Commissioning Officer, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council
Brigid McGrath	Brightfire CIC, Expert by Experience
Sean Ladd	National Star College
Michelle Baillon	Social Prescriber, Taurus Healthcare
Ugo Jonathan	Manager – Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training
Roz Pither	Head of Additional Needs, Children and Young People
Glen Crosier	Senior Commissioning Officer, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council
Chris Smith	Service Development Officer, Envirobility
Paula Evans	Manager, Envirobility
Mary Simpson	Healthwatch
Katie Eastaugh	Cart Shed
James Baker	Hereford Make / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Bryn Brooks	Parent Carer
Zoe Backhouse	Specialist Autism Advisor, Autism West Midlands, Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Apologies

Name	Role
Alexia Heath	Senior Advisor Post 16 Learning and Skills, Herefordshire Council
Richard Clark	Senior Practitioner, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council
Bernadette Louise	Autism Champion
Emma Jones	Social Prescriber for the North & West Herefordshire Primary Care Network (N&W PCN)

Introductions and Apologies

Valerie welcomed everyone, apologised for the slight delay to the start of the meeting before asking people if they had any conflicts of interests and going through the actions from the previous meetings.

Conflict of Interest

No one declared a conflict of interest.

Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings – Valerie Fitch

1. Actions from the 14th February 2023 Meeting

Attendees	Action	Details	Update
Paul Choppen	2	Add information on the Autism West Midlands and Brighfire services to the Autism Partnership Webpage.	This is now Completed.
Brigid McGarth, Paul Choppen	5	Brigid to send out the questionnaire on how autistic people would like to engage in peer support to Paul who will forward to board members.	Brightfire are now running a workshop to gather the feedback from autistic people on what type of peer support service is needed

2. Actions from 15th April 2023 Meeting

Attendees	Action	Details	Update
Debbie Hobbs	1	To send Valerie an update on the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training	
Paul Choppen	2	Valerie asked Paul to create an index of all the acronyms and abbreviations used during meetings.	Paul has updated a template which Valerie has sent him and will attach to these minutes
Sally Wilson/Glen Crozier	3	Sally and Glen to contact James to discuss the difficulty Hereford Make is facing getting funding for support for students.	Glen and Sally still need to contact James.
Silvia Nichols/Paul Choppen	4	Silvia to send the details of the Mental Health Partnership along with the workshop around the changes to the library and museum to Paul to disseminate to Board members.	<p>Silvia had emailed to Paul to say the workshops have been stopped due to the Council taking time to re-consider moving the library.</p> <p>Silvia emailed Paul to say the MHPB are different to the LD, Autism and MIR boards as membership id invite only. In the next couple of months Silvia is looking to exchange new ideas with them at their next meeting in the autumn. Silvia</p>

			will keep Paul informed as to what has been decided.
Paul Choppen	5	To set up the next Autism Partnership Board meeting on MS Teams and invite members.	Completed

Police reports – Valerie Fitch

Valerie has not received the latest reports on hate incidents concerning autistic individuals but will chase for our next meeting.

Complex needs framework - John Burgess

John explained that the Complex Needs Framework is a joint piece of work between Worcestershire and Herefordshire ICB born out of Transforming Care. The aim is to create a framework of providers able to offer specialist support for people with a learning disability or autism who have complex needs within the local community. The framework will help reduce the number of people ending up in hospital environments. More work needs to be done to gather the feedback of people in Herefordshire on this as the plans are currently very Worcestershire centric.

It should be signed off in September or October and be effective from May/June 2024.

Laura mentioned that a framework around strategic accommodation with housing management providers is needed. She also stressed the need for individuals to have ability to enter in to a scheme with a housing management provider to buy their own home.

A discussion ensued about the need for a system to record unmet needs to help ascertain numbers and match individuals with providers who can provide their needs.

All Age Joint Autism Strategy Update – Glen Crozier

Glen recapped on the timeline for the Autism Strategy. The live survey engagement has been completed regarding the 7 priorities. The data and feedback is being collated and being shared with the leads of each priority.

Over July and August discussions will be sought on the key themes emerging within each of the priorities. These themes will be used to help decide on 3-8 key actions/outcomes for each priority that will go into the draft strategy.

Between October and the end of the year the governance route will be established for both Herefordshire and Worcestershire across the ICB system. Some of the governance will be specific to each county with the hope of having the strategy finalised in early 2024. A newsletter is intended to be produced in April setting out the key actions for each priority and the roadmap for year 1. This is intended to be followed up by quarterly editions of the newsletter outlining the progress made.

Priority 4

Sally Wilson (Head of Care Commissioning, Community Wellbeing) and Roz Pither (Head of Additional Needs, Children and Young People) have liaised to form a project steering group covering representatives from both adult and children services. The steering group meets on a fortnightly basis and includes members nominated to push forward the work streams and actions associated with each of the 7 priorities and update the Board on Strategy progress.

Roz asked Anna to join the steering group to help co-ordinate feedback response and engagement work.

Action 1 - Roz will send details of the steering group's meetings to Anna.

Roz added that if anyone is aware of groups that need to be engaged with via workshops in Herefordshire before sign off to let her know.

Roz's email address is Rosalind.Pither@herefordshire.gov.uk

Anna also mentioned that she expected to get feedback on the inconsistent quality of services across health that autistic individuals receive.

Priority 7 Keeping Safe

John Gorman and Glen had sought feedback on Keeping Safe through responses to the engagement questionnaire and through direct engagement with organisations and people across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Glen was handling responses from local government organisations while John was handling the voluntary sector.

Engagement workshops will be held across the next 4-6 weeks to discuss what they think are the key issues. John also mentioned that Carerlink will help source the opinion of carers.

A group has also been set up to help design the strategy document so that it is accessible and available in different formats. The document will also be co-produced with members of the autistic community.

Valerie asked Glen to look at how they could engage even more widely to groups not using local services or not using the internet.

Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training - Ugo Jonathan

Ugo introduced himself as the Project manager for the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training (OMMT).

The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism

Tier 1

For people who require general awareness of the support autistic people or people with a learning disability may need.



elearning with handbook

and



Online interactive session

or

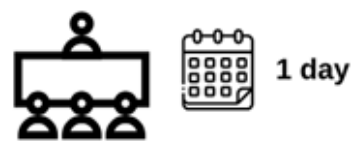
Tier 2

For people who may need to provide care and support for autistic people or people with a learning disability.



elearning with handbook

and



Face to face training

Ugo explained that the training is for everyone that works in the care system or provides care. The aim is to train around 25,000 individuals over a 3 year cycle. They are looking to have 20 trainers in total. They are currently in the process of training the trainers. So far one session has been held with two more scheduled over the next couple of weeks. They hope to start delivering the Tier 1 training in September and Tier 2 training in November.

Ugo did say he was looking for venues within Hereford for the Tier 2 training in November. Ugo's email address is: ugo.jonathan@nhs.net

Both the online interactive session and the face to face training will be conducted by experts by experience in both autism and learning disabilities. The two parts of the training need to be completed within 6 months of each other.

To register for the e-learning please follow the link eLearning for Health Care link <https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Component/Details/781480>

ICS (Integrated Care System) Updates – GP Surgery Sensory Assessments and ED – Valerie Fitch

Valerie gave apologies from Richard Keble.

Since the last meeting Ruth Clark (Operational Support Manager, Emergency Department, Wye Valley NHS Trust) the Emergency Department have been going into schools to explain the sensory changes they have been making to the hospital. They have also been doing an assessment and 76% of the reported feedback has been positive on the changes that have been made within ED. Valerie has so far trained 73 out of the 120 staff within the Emergency Department on Sensory Needs.

Valerie has also done GP sensory assessments with two surgeries in Leominster. Worcestershire are now ahead of Herefordshire in terms of the amount of surgeries having sensory assessments.

Feedback from Partner Organizations

The Carers Strategy – John Burgess

It is under development that's overdue by quite a bit and it has, therefore, been prioritized. Engagement events will take place over September and October along with a survey that will be coming out shortly. It is hoped the strategy will be signed off by June 2024.

The Suicide Prevention Strategy (lead Louise McEvoy)

John Burgess mentioned that with a higher rate of incidents of suicide amongst people who are autistic, Board members may wish to get involved in the engagement work around the Suicide Prevention Strategy. More details will be shared with the Board in due course.

James Baker

James mentioned Neuropool which is an organization specializing in supporting neurodivergent individuals into employment. James thought they could be a useful resource in improving the number of autistic people in employment within Herefordshire. Their website address is:

<https://neuropool.co/>

Secondly James mentioned he was at the Herefordshire Youth Provision Forum where he was made aware that the Youth Forum for West Midlands had grants available for young individuals to help with their wellbeing. Once James receives the forms he will share the details.

At the SEND Employment Forum James bumped into Les Knight and discussed the Education and Health Care Plans. It was brought to James' attention that the individuals only need to identify as autistic for it to apply as opposed to a formal diagnosis.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/education-health-care-plans/2>

Cart Shed – Brigid McGrath

Brigid mentioned that the Cart Shed run a program for individuals aged 14-18 years old called Into the Woods who are not in education or employment. This group isn't specifically for young autistic individuals, however, a lot of people on it are neurodivergent.

<https://www.thecartshed.co.uk/young-cart-shed>

Children and Young People Agenda – Anna Swift.

On the 24th of July 1:30-4:30pm at the Bank House Hotel. Anna will be holding a workshop for colleagues across the ICS to start and look at how the overall care pathway and provision is improved. With a particular focus on diagnostic assessment and post diagnosis support for autism and ADHD in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This will include support for the children and young people, their parents, carers and the professionals both at the beginning and end of the assessment process.

Anna has also been working with colleagues to improve the Local Offer information around neurodivergent children and young people. Emma Kelly has been busy setting up consultations and co-production workshops with parents starting next week.

Autism West Midlands and Brightfire - Zoe Backhouse and Brigid McGrath

Brightfire partnered with Autism West Midlands last year who won their bid to run the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Community Autism Support Service. Brightfire delivered the 1-1 post diagnostic support service for adults 16+ in Herefordshire. Brigid mentioned that the service has broadened out to all adults 16+ who are autistic and needing support. So far Brightfire have only had 33 Herefordshire referrals to the service in the 11 months the service has been running. Brightfire have the capacity to see 144 referrals a year. Brigid is not sure why this is. Brightfire itself is not responsible for the publicity or marketing of this service.

For context Autism West Midlands who run the 1-1 support service in Worcestershire have a significant amount of people coming through with about 37 individuals on the waiting list. Autism West Midlands also run an Autism Confident Programme across both counties.

The 1-1 support service in Herefordshire is being promoted on the Autism Partnership Board webpage and through the Herefordshire Community Partnership website and events. Zoe also shares information on the service with charities and organisations across Herefordshire and the DWP. Autism West Midlands also intend to set up a Facebook page to promote their services.

Autism West Midlands have started capturing referral routes to the services. Referrals from Herefordshire so far have come through the Social Prescribing Team and Mental Health Teams. They so far have had a low number of Herefordshire referrals from the Family Psychologists compared to Worcestershire, Zoe is not sure if this is proportionate or not. Referrals can be made in various ways, once they have been diagnosed through: the Family Psychologists, directly via Autism West Midlands website, through email and over the phone as well as referral forms at events.

Action 2 - Sean said he was happy to touch base with Brigid and Zoe about potential referrals from the Star College.

Action 3 - Brigid asked for more marketing information from Zoe to promote the service.

Update 11/07/23- Zoe later confirmed the number of referrals to Autism West Midlands Community Support Service (AWM CASS).

Between 1st August 2022 and 10th July 2023 (This is the total for Year 1 and Year 2 up to 10th July 2023) –

Total of 259 referrals (Both 1:1 and Autism Confident) – 67 Herefordshire and 192 Worcestershire.

17 requested Autism Confident

12 were from undiagnosed individuals whom we are unable to support at this time.

For Year 2 From 1st April 2023 – 10th July 2023. (These numbers are included in the above numbers)

Total of 89 referrals (Both 1:1 and Autism Confident) – 21 Herefordshire and 68 Worcestershire.

5 were from undiagnosed individuals whom we are unable to support at this time.

AWM are working on marketing and aim to attend events and link in with other services across Herefordshire to share the service more.

Update 07/08/23 - Brightfire CIC and Autism West Midlands will be ending their partnership from September. This will not affect the support autistic adults in both counties receive from the Community Autism Support Service as any 1:1 support will continue to be delivered by autism advisors working for Autism West Midlands as well as Autism Confident programmes and the development of workshops and social groups.

The referral form for Autism West Midlands is attached and is open to anyone that has an autism diagnosis.

Healthwatch

Mary mentioned that Healthwatch is doing a piece of work on health checks with people who have a learning disability, some of which also have autism. Focusing mostly on people who aren't currently taking advantage of health checks and vaccines. If anyone has any people Mary could go and have a chat with please let her know: mary@healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk

Personal Experience

Bryn gave a personal update on his and his wife's issues getting help for his autistic daughter. He discussed issues he had knowing who to contact to raising issues about the needs assessment questions, the lack of clear contact information at the assessment sign off stage to raise any complaints or amendments. He mentioned the issues Herefordshire Council had had finding a suitable support worker for his daughter and subsequently the stress this caused. Prior to today's meeting Bryn contacted Autism West Midlands who have been very helpful and have helped put his mind at ease. Bryn mentioned his dismay at the way Herefordshire Council had handled his daughter's case and of not being put in contact with Autism West Midlands after the last Board meeting.

Action 4 - Sally had been unable to make contact with Bryn but will discuss his daughter's case with operational colleagues so they link in with him.

Brightfire

Brigid discussed the Being Autistic project based at the Cart Shed which is a 12 week course where peer groups of 8-9 individuals 16+ with or without formal autism diagnosis do art psychotherapy and education. Currently there is a 6 month waiting list, they are looking how they can extend the program to more people, including other age groups and aim to start providing follow up support.

A.O.B

No one had any other business

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on the Tuesday 12nd of September from 3pm-5:30pm in the Mordiford room.

Actions

Attendee	Action	Detail
Roz Pither	1	To send details of the adult and children services steering group meetings to Anna Swift.

Sean Ladd, Brigid McGrath and Zoe Backhouse	2	To discuss potential referrals from the Star College to Brighfire and Autism West Midlands autism support services.
Zoe Backhouse	3	Brigid asked for more marketing information from Zoe to promote the 1-1 autism support service.
Sally Wilson	4	Sally will discuss Bryn's daughter's case with operational colleagues so they link in with him.