



Notes of the Autism Norfolk Forum (ANF) Meeting

Held on: 16th July 2024 13:00-15:00

Venue: Online via Zoom

Please note: These notes represent an overview summary of this meeting rather than a verbatim transcript.

Name of Attendee	Organisation and/or Role
Lee Gibbons	ASD Helping Hands, Norfolk Autism Partnership Co-ordinator
Members of the public (12) Registered Attendees (28)	

Agenda Item 1	Welcome and Introduction
1.1	Welcome and introductions made: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This Forum was held using Zoom• Communication prompts and their use explained.• Acknowledged a note taker is provided.• Norfolk Autism Partnership Board's (NAPB) Code of Conduct and Coproduction principles introduced and explained.

Agenda Item 2	Update from the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board
2.1	Lee Gibbons provided an updated on the work the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board has been carrying out since the last forum.
2.2	The Norfolk All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2029 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In August 2023 we (The NAPB) formed the strategy reference group. This was made up of autistic people /parents & Carers and Professionals• This Groupe reviewed the previous strategy and identified its remaining goals and produced a 'you said, we did' documents and animation.• The Strategy Reference group proposed 6 priorities that aligned with the national Autism Strategy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through a questionnaire, workbook and in person sessions they gathered people’s views on these priorities. • This feedback was used to shape the priorities and include more detail. • A draft of the strategy and summary have now been written and the Norfolk Autism Partnership are looking to launch this later this year.
2.2	<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Norfolk Autism Partnership has just finished delivering 8 sessions of the co-produced Understanding Autism Course for Hertfordshire NHS Partnership Trust. Around 85 staff members took part. • In April 2024 we also delivered one session of this training to Realise Futures for 12 staff • In the Past 6 months 814 people have taken the free online Autism Awareness training that is available on the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board Website. • This free online training was updated on 25th June 2024. To correct some wording and new ideas.
2.2	<p>Question: Would the Oliver McGowan training be offered to people who employed support through a personal budget allowance?</p> <p>Answer: As this is currently still being rolled out, we are unsure of what offer will be made to different groups of people. KD to ask the DPSS (Direct Payment Support Service) what training is available and if this group of people can be considered in the roll out for the Oliver McGowan training.</p> <p>Answer provided by KD (25/07/2024) KD has spoken to the person responsible for the rollout of the Oliver McGowan training to external workforces. They are going to meet to discuss that PS’s are considered in eh plans of the rollout, this will then inform how the Direct Payment Support Service (DPSS) communicates this to employers of PA’s.</p>
2.4	<p>Quick Reference Guides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Partnership with Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board and Norfolk County Council, the Norfolk Autism Partnership have co-produced 4 reference guides for people to download. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family and Children Quick Reference Guide (Norfolk) ○ Family and Children Quick Reference Guide (Waveney) ○ Autistic Adult Quick Reference Guide (Norfolk) ○ Autistic Adult Quick Reference Guide (Waveney) • This can be downloaded from the Norfolk Autism Partnership Website under the ‘Autism Information’ section

2.5	<p>Norfolk Autism Directory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the launch of the Autism Norfolk Directory in April we have had over 1350 visitors and over 3300 views of the directory. • The Directory is an online resource for people to find support where their primary need is Autism • The directory was co-produced by the Norfolk Autism Partnership making sure it was user friendly and easy to navigate. • We are still working on encouraging organisations to add their details. • We also congratulated some of the photo contest winners. All winners and photo credits can be viewed at: https://directory.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/?page_id=619
2.6	<p>Research Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University of East Anglia, Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board worked together on a short research project from October 2023 to March 2024. • The project aimed to understand more about the needs, wellbeing and quality of life of autistic adults in Norfolk. • It also look at how we can measure these to evaluate the impact of a new short term autism support service. • To view the full summary of the research project please visit: https://www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/2024/06/13/research-on-support-for-autistic-adults-in-norfolk-summary-report/

Agenda Item 3	Current and upcoming Engagement Opportunities
3.1	Lee Gibbons gave an overview of the upcoming and current engagement and co-production opportunities.
3.2	<p>The Norfolk All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2029</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the Strategy has been signed off, one approach we are considering is the formation of working groups for each of the priorities. • We will need Autistic people, parents and carers and professionals to join these groups to work towards delivery the priorities of the Norfolk Autism Partnership. • These groups will co-produce action plans and work together to deliver these. • The Norfolk Autism Partnership will pay an involvement fee to autistic people and parent/carers for their time. Currently from £11.00 per hour. (Although his rate is being reviewed currently to reflect minimum national wage)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you would like to be considered for these groups, please complete out Interest form: www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/interest-register/
3.3	<p>Opportunities that the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suicide Prevention for autistic people: Survey All Age Carers Strategy for Norfolk & Waveney- We need your help to make sure we have got it right! Therapeutic Practice and Autism Survey Online Survey on Age-Related Differences in Physical Activity Levels, Physical Activity Preferences, Mental Health, and Quality of Life among Autistic Adults Community Engagement Sessions: Adult Social Services <p>All details and how to participate are located on the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board. (This are updated regularly. If an opportunity does not appear it may now be closed)</p>

Agenda Item 4	Open Floor Discussion
4.1	This was an item for anyone in the group to bring their worries, concerns or good news stories to the group for discussion.
4.2	<p>Neurodiversity Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to the comments made around the Autism Central Hub (which is mainly aimed at parents and carers) where is the one for autistic / neurodiverse people One member of the group brought forward the idea for a physical Norfolk Base Neurodiversity hub for Neurodiverse adults /young people that was popular with the group. Members of the group commented on how a hub would be helpful at providing early intervention for any one with neurodiversity offering support and a place to receive peer to peer support. This would also link into Mental Health support for people with neurodiversity. Comments were made that something such as a hub should be all inclusive of all neuro diversities as there are many cross overs between the difference. This hub should not signpost to other organisations but act as a service to those seeking support, Many group members commented on how they had been signposted to other organisations and have had to go round several as one organisation does not fully understand the remit of others, and they end up going round in circles.
4.3	Mental Health

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One member of the group told us about the struggles they were having in gaining low level Mental Health support for their autistic son (Adult). • They said they would like someone to teach him relevant strategies to help reduce their anxiety and reduce the state of fight or flight response that they constantly seem to be in. • They do receive Personal Assistant support for a medical condition, but this is not his primary need of Autism, which they believe they struggle with the most. • Specific Mental health concerns of this adult cannot be treated in a neurotypical way (i.e. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) • They mentioned an approach like Trauma Based support should be used but an Autism based support and that this should be holistic in its approach. • Our current short term Support Service does look to support people in a holistic and person-centred way although this can be difficult and time consuming • Group members believed that while 'on the ground' teams are aware and try to make these changes that this ethos needs to go to higher levels of management and service providers. • Group members agreed to be put in touch with the short-term Support Service and the commissioning manager to discuss this further.
4.4	<p>Adult Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One member of the group asked if anyone had enrolled on any of the adult learning courses facilitated by Norfolk County Council as there was a new course on Neurodiversity and Autism that they were promoting. • No other group members have enrolled on these courses yet • If the member was to enrol, they would feed back to the group on their thoughts of the training.

Agenda Item 5	Any Other Business
5.1	<p>One member of the group wanted to bring to our attention a YouTube channel they managed that was about reading stories to Neurodiverse children.</p> <p>Website: thelittleautisticlibrary.wordpress.com</p>

Agenda Item 7	Close of Meeting
7.1	The Norfolk Autism Forum was closed

Date, time, and location of next meeting

The next Autism Norfolk Forum will be held on:

Tuesday 22nd October 2024 13:00-15:00

Sign-up details will be posted to the Partnership's webpage and sent to members.
The topic of this forum has not yet been decided.

Future Forum meeting dates:

Tuesday 25 February 2025 13:00-15:00

Tuesday 29 April 2025 13:00-15:00

Tuesday 01 July 2025 13:00-15:00

Tuesday 02 September 2025 13:00-15:00

Glossary

ANF:	Autism Norfolk Forum
ASD:	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASB:	Autism Service Norfolk
ICB:	Integrated Care Board
ICS:	Integrated Care System
EHCP:	Education, Health and Care Plan
FOIA:	Freedom of Information Act
GDPR:	General Data Protection Regulations
NAP:	Norfolk Autism Partnership
NAPB:	Norfolk Autism Partnership Board
NAS:	National Autistic Society
NCC:	Norfolk County Council
NCH&C:	Norfolk Community Health and Care
N&SFT:	Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust
SEND:	Special Educational Need and Disabilities
UEA:	University of East Anglia
WAW:	World Autism Week
WG:	Working Group
WG Lead:	Working Group Lead