

Notes from the Autism Norfolk Forum

Held on: Tuesday 21/01/2025 13:00-14:35

Venue: Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting Notes

Agenda Item	Welcome, Introduction & Approval of minutes and action log	Action and Due Date
1.1	Welcome and introductions made. Communication prompts posted to the Zoom Chat window, and their use explained. No reasonable adjustments were requested. Members reported no declaration of interest. Meeting rules where explained	
Agenda Item	Update from the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board	Action and Due Date
2.1	<p><u>Year One Plan</u> The Norfolk Autism Partnership has now approved the Year One Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This outlines what our partner organisations wish to achieve in Year One of the Norfolk Autism Strategy • The Year One Plan can be viewed on the Norfolk Autism Partnership Website under ‘The Strategy’ Section • The newly formed Strategy Oversight Group is now in the process of gathering the first set of feedback from partner organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategy Oversight Group has agreed to request updates on progress every 2 months • In August 2025 we will ask partner organisations to begin to think about the actions for the Year Two Plan 	
2.2	<p><u>Norfolk Autism Partnership Board Membership Audit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late last year we carried out a membership audit. • We asked people to confirm if they still wanted to attend the board meetings and if they were the correct person from their organisation to attend. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Norfolk Autism Partnership Board make up consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Autistic People • 3 Parent/Carers • 3 members of the Integrated Care Board • 3 members of the Police and Justice System • 3 members form Norfolk County Council • 1 representative from Primary and Community Health (Adults) • 1 representative from Primary and Community Health (Children and Young People) • 3 representatives from the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector • 1 Other 	
<p style="text-align: center;">2.3</p>	<p><u>Training Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the past 12 months, the NAPB has delivered this course to 85 Staff at Hertfordshire NHS Partnership Trust and 12 Staff at Realise Futures. • Ambitious about Autism has been delivered to 478 Adult and Family social care staff between 1st July '23 and 30th June '24. • On Monday (20/01/2025) we delivered an Understanding Autism course to the Staff at Oxburgh Hall (National trust), and a training session has been booked with Acle Pre School for the 18th February. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">2.4</p>	<p><u>Current Involvement Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Social Care supported self-assessment form • Free training for experts with lived experience • Women’s experience of accessing healthcare • Carer Involvement Meetings 	

2.5	<p>Future actions for the Norfolk Autism Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend both Family Voice Conference (22nd March) and Co-Production Event (9th July) • Begin to plan for Autism Acceptance Week (31st March – 6th April) • Push for more organisations and groups to join the Norfolk Autism Directory 	
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Agenda Item	Open Discussion: Access to Mental Health Services	Action and Due Date
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the Norfolk All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2029 (Priority 4) the Norfolk Autism Partnership wishes to engage in a conversation with the Mental Health Service teams and commissioners about the lack of autism-aligned Mental Health services for Autistic people in Norfolk. As outlined in the NHS England's Meeting the needs of autistic adults in mental health services. • We have gathered research alongside fact and figures, but we need to demonstrate the current impact the service is having on people. • To do this we need your help to illustrate the impact this has on you or an autistic person you care for by hearing your stories. 	
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees of the Autism Norfolk Forum were asked to consider 3 questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you been able to access an autism-aligned mental health service in Norfolk? • Did it meet your needs as an autistic person? • What did or could have made it better for you? • There was also an online survey that people could complete the submit their responses 	



<p>3.3</p>	<p>Key Themes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dual Diagnosis and Access Challenges:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individuals with co-occurring ADHD and ASD face systemic barriers; being on one service's waiting list can block access to others.• Mental Health (MH) crises are often misidentified in autistic individuals, with autistic burnout mistaken for depression.2. Lack of Joined-Up Services:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Norfolk's approach is fragmented compared to Liverpool's holistic model, where specific autistic needs are integrated into care.3. Miscommunication and Dismissal:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professionals often misinterpret autistic behaviours, leading to feelings of gaslighting and blame.• Autistic individuals frequently face rigid systems ill-suited to their unique needs.4. Holistic and Person-Centred Care:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful interventions involved recognising individual autistic traits, interests, and sensory sensitivities.5. Structural Issues in Service Design:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services are inflexible and lack a cohesive framework to address neurodivergent needs effectively. <p>Action: Compile a report for the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board</p>	<p>Lee Gibbons 24/01/2025</p>
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Agenda Item	Any Other Business	Action and Due Date
4.1	No other business recorded	

Agenda Item	Close of meeting	Action and Due Date
8.1	The NAPB Co-Ordinator thank ed everyone for coming along and closed the Meeting	

Future Meeting Dates	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tuesday 29th April 2025 13:00-15:00• Tuesday 8th July 2025 13:00-15:00• Tuesday 21st October 2025 13:00-15:00	