



Meeting held on 19th July 2022 via Zoom

Tom welcomed everyone, and attendees introduced themselves.

Notes of the last meeting / matters arising:

No follow up actions:

Lynne Ramnanansingh sent apologies for this meeting – her item on LeDeR will be rescheduled for a future meeting – **Action: Samantha to add to agenda**

Peer Autism Champion – Anja Barker

Anja's presentation on Peer Autism Champion will be sent around with the minutes.

- Anja introduced herself as the Community Prevention manager joined in early March – her current project is around Health Champions for Autistic Adults in Surrey.
- The project is a free training programme around the physical and mental wellbeing for people with autism. Recruiting autistic individuals to take part in the training, increasing their confidence, share messages among peers and people they meet, help with equality, and empower people.
- The project was started before and was codesigned with autistic adults, the feedback received wasn't positive enough for the project to continue.

The learning outcomes were:

- More support needed about wider work tackling health inequalities.
- Changing perception of the course, so the project becomes focussed on changing the system rather than people.
- People were not so sure what the course was about.
- Face to face delivery would have been better than virtual.
- Trainer needs to be knowledgeable of other projects in Surrey.

Questions, Answers, and comments:

- 1) Sara asked is there information that can be circulated to autistic people to see if they are interested?

Anja responded saying she is working on it, including posters and other informative material. **Anja to send information to ldcommunications@surreycc.gov.uk** when this is ready

Sara asked Anja if she can write a paragraph about the project for the NAS Surrey Branch August newsletter – to be finalised by the end of the week
Anja said she will email this over.

- 2) Clare mentioned she feels the training has still missed the point. Clare highlighted the use of language “tell them how they can improve” instead of





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was suggested to listen to autistic people's feedback, and adjust to their needs.

Anja agreed to look into how that can be changed and emphasised the commitment to involving autistic people in the project and implementing their feedback.

- 3) Bex commented that autistic people come across many barriers to good health. Is this training going to direct them to a place to change, or are we going to be told what to do? Someone may understand why it is a good idea to do something, but not how to go about it. What information will be given to help people? It is good to know the expectations.

Anja responded to say the project aims to understand the feedback from autistic people and implement training accordingly.

Tom commented, the project is coming to people with autism in a tricky context. There are significant health inequalities for autistic people because of lack of understanding and reasonable adjustments in services. The project aims to support autistic people to take a positive role to help improve the population's health, but there is a risk that autistic people may feel the project is placing the problem back with them. This project is trying to address the powerlessness that people can feel in terms of our own health, but the communication needs to be careful so that individuals do not feel blamed for things that services have got wrong.

Bex stressed the importance of being upfront with participants about expectations and the limitations of the project.

Anja commented a lot of work is going on around health and wellbeing champions and this is one of several projects running in Surrey.

- 4) Fi commented that the presentation was very insightful and asked how it is funded - is it linked in with PBS projects or Elaine Thomas' work? Specific projects are conscious of not duplicating or crossing over. **Fi to send Anja information about other similar projects**

Funding: There is limited funding at the moment, while the project is being codesigned and piloted. Further funding can be applied for if there is good feedback.

- 5) Martin commented that autistic people will have a good idea of the health issues they have – what they want to improve and the barriers they face individually within the healthcare system. Will the workshop investigate individual barriers?





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Anja - Yes- people can share views at initial feedback, as the course layout is not set yet, and this can become an area the training covers.

Martin - What kind of commitment is required to get involved?

Anja – there will be 11 co designed sessions 1.5hrs each, while appreciating people's other commitments, it's important that people can be consistent with attendance.

- 6) Tim mentioned the NHS pilot of pre and post diagnostic support - Is this useful to join in with this project? **Tim to contact Anja to follow up.**
Are hospital passports also included in the training?

Anja – Hospital passport is already on the Partnership Board website and should be consistently promoted, including through this project.

- 7) Sara C asked where is the data presented is from?

Anja Data is taken from the University of Cambridge Autistic adults.co.uk and Surrey index.

Surrey Autism Champion Training – Autism by Experience

Mike's presentation has been sent round with the minutes.

- Mike spoke to the group about the Autism Champion training planned to start Autumn 2022.
- Mike introduced the team working on this project, made up mainly of autistic people.
- The Surrey Autism Champion Training shares experiences and challenges people with autism face day-to day. It helps raise awareness of autism in both a professional and informal environment, with professionals, family, and carers and helping autistic people overcome their barriers.
- The programme has 7 modules, and the plan is for it to run 5 times until March 2024
- Each workshop can be tailor made to suit the attendees' needs.

Questions, Answers and Comments:

- 1) Sabrina asked about autistic employees as well as people supported by services. Does the training programme cover adjustments in the workplace?

Mike – Yes – It applies equally to support someone with autism in the workplace or someone being supported in a service. The workshops can





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cover adjustments at work and to help colleagues and managers better understand the needs of an autistic colleague.

- 2) Andrea W: Surrey CC – Programme Manager for Inclusion - How many people can be trained at a time?

Mike - 15 people can access each group – The plan is for places to be offered for:

- 15 people Oct 2022 – March 2023
- 30 people April 2023 – September 2023 and
- 30 people October 2023 – March 2024

Mike also mentioned bespoke training sessions can be arranged.

Andrea: How long will the training take?

Mike: Training is delivered over a 6-month period, in 7 modules.

Tom M commented that the Autism Strategy talks about need for this type of training. This Board has worked closely with Autism by Experience on the development. There is a need for different types of training - The Autism Champions programme aims to train up 1 or 2 people in a team to be practice leads for the service

Mike added - A real strength of this approach is to this allow trainees time to explore and embed their knowledge in their day-to-day practice.

AOB

- John described the NHS e-learning platform's autism training – and its relevance to the Autism by Experience offer. Similar content, but for a healthcare environment.
- Tom M asked if there was a way to share that
- John replied he is unsure as it is an NHS system, but good courses from Tizard Centre at the University of Kent, and University of Plymouth are available online. Autism Champions training would be very useful to psychiatric liaison nurses, who support autistic people daily.

Accessibility of these Autism Partnership Board Meetings:

- **For the next meeting we need to ensure that the subtitles are enabled.**
- **Ensure agendas and presentations are circulated in advance of the meeting.** This is so that people can have time to process and familiarise themselves with the meeting content, and pre preparing any questions, comments, and suggestions.
- The meeting was closed, Tom and Bex thanked everyone for attending.

Future meeting dates:

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 18th October 2022 at 1:30 – 3:30pm





Surrey Autism Partnership Board

Attendance:

Co Chairs

- Thomas Moore
- Rebekah Worgan

Board Members

- Amelie de Vazelhes
- Angela MacSharry
- Sara Truman
- Sarah Cawley
- Matt Hardy
- James Coughlan
- John Muggleton – Parent/Carer
- Clare Burgess – Surrey Coalition of Disabled People
- Martin Woodward – Surrey Choices EmployAbility
- Christina Earl – Surrey Choices EmployAbility
- Mary Hendrick- Senior Commissioning Manager
- Samantha Lewis – Adult Senior Business Support Assistant
- Anja Barker – Communities and Prevention Manager
- Sabrina Peters – AN & D Participation Officer
- Lynsey Way – Active Prospects
- Tim Harrison – Service Manager of the Neurodevelopmental Service
- Fi Bovino – Surrey Heartlands
- Mike Leat – Clear Communication People Ltd

