**Sheffield Autism Partnership Board**

**2nd April 2025**

**In Attendance:**

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| Kaarina Hollo **(Chair)** | Siobhan Salter **(Minutes)** | Mary Vere |
| Chinyere Ehosiem | Michelle Cook | Jessica Beech |
| Christine Anderson | Kelly Scargill | Ben Duke |
| David Newman | Sylvia Johnson | Joanne McCrum |
| Chloe Wilks | Richard Groves | Alexis Chappell |
| Charlotte Worthington | Sandra Capewell | Anita Goldschmied |
| Joe Hamshere |  |  |

**Apologies Noted: Anna Guest, Susan Kirkman, Tim Wroe, Ellie Cook, Danny Antrobus, Laura Costa, Katie Drinkwater, Katie Monette, Louisa King**

**Agenda & Minutes**

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| **Time** | **Item** | **Speaker** |
| 3.15pm | **Welcome and introductions*** Kaarina Hollo welcomed everybody to today's meeting and ran through housekeeping.
 | Anna GuestKaarina Hollo |
| 3.20pm | **Update from Alexis Chappell*** Alexis announced to the board that she is leaving Sheffield and will be moving back home to Scotland to be near family.
* Alexis is going to remain involved with the Autism Partnership Board for a while after she has moved as she knows how important consistency is with this board.
* Alexis shared that it has been a great pleasure working with everybody over the past 4 and a half years.
* Alexis introduced Richard Groves to the board and announced Richard will be taking the lead on the board going forward.
* Richard shared that he is now into his third month at Sheffield City Council. He is excited to be working in Sheffield and supporting the board in developing the Autism approach going forward.
 | Alexis Chappell |
| 3.30pm | **Autism Festival Update*** Alexis shared the link to the Eventbrite invite - https://www.eventbrite.com/o/sheffield-cares-104233364621
* There are various initiatives taking place during these few days (15th, 16th, 17th April).
* This has been arranged as part of World Autism Acceptance month.
* Part of the purpose of the festival will be to gain feedback on how to move forward with the Autism strategy, using voices to update the strategy and key priorities.
* The festival is covering a range of topics and exhibitions.
* The Eventbrite link has details on how to log on to this.
* Sylvia asked for clarification for those who are working the festival - How they will know how many people have signed up for their area via Eventbrite.
* Kelly highlighted she worries that Eventbrite isn't accessible for all and asked how people can sign up through an alternative route.
* Alexis advised people can email the Adult Leadership Team inbox as an alternative way to sign up - ahscleadershipteam@sheffield.gov.uk
* Kelly asked that this email address be added to Eventbrite so people can have access to the email as an alternative option.
* Chinyere asked if we have a flyer for this as this could be handier and more accessible for people.
* Ben asked if relevant organisations have been contacted.
* Alexis advised that details of the festival have been listed on the Sheffield Carers website, and the Council media team have also been promoting it. Alexis is going to follow up with Raheel after the meeting regarding flyers/posters and encourages people on the board to spread the word.
* Mary highlighted that she was shocked that flyers hadn’t been created for the festival, as they are vital for people to get the word out.
* Alexis advised we usually don't use flyer to be more carbon neutral, however, does take on the feedback from the board around these and will pass this on to the organisers of the festival.
* Sylvia asked for clarification on who is taking the lead on the Autism Festival as this isn't very clear.
* Sylvia also advised that there are no photos on Eventbrite of the venues that are vital for people who rely on imagery instead of wording to find locations.
* Alexis is going to suggest to Catherine Bunten to do a debrief and some learning around this with Richard so going forward we are informed on how to arrange events like this.
* **Action:** Siobhan to arrange a debrief with key colleagues on this after the festival has taken place.
 | Alexis Chappell |
| 3:45pm | **Workstreams, Actions Plan Update and Cycle of Reporting*** Alexis suggested the board have an interactive session to find out where we're at and help us prioritise our focus for the future.
* Sandra shared a slide show around the themes and national priorities.
* Kaarina suggested rolling this over to the next meeting as there is a lot of information to fit into the time frame we have for this agenda item.
* Alexis agreed on having a longer discussion on this for the next meeting.
* **Action:** Siobhan to set up a meeting for Alexis to have a discussion with Kaarina, Anna and Richard about the cycle of assurance around this piece of work.
* Alexis advised she had a discussion with Katie Monette after the last board meeting about how we can involve Childrens workstreams in the board more.
 | Alexis Chappell |
| 3.55pm | Comfort break |  |
| 4:00pm | **Benefits/PIP Discussion*** Alexis advised that this agenda item came from discussions at the pre-agenda meeting following the announcements made by the government on benefits.
* Mary highlighted that it must be understood that the PIP system is broken. It makes people feel like villains. Evidence provided is ignored. It must be especially hard for parents with children who have intense needs to cope as it’s such a difficult process.
* Michelle Agreed with Mary that the system is broken, and the process is brutal. Even people who are successful must go through a difficult process.
* Nothing has been set in stone yet as it has got to go through legislation. We all agree that it's in need of urgent reform.
* Michelle encouraged everyone to add their comments and experiences to the green paper - https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/pathways-to-work-reforming-benefits-and-support-to-get-britain-working-green-paper
* Sylvia highlighted that she thinks it's important that this group along with other APB's across the country put in a strong response on behalf of adults. If the legislation goes ahead as pitched it means many Autistic people won't be able to get the help they need financially.
* Kelly shared that Scope have a ready-made letter to send to your MP - https://forum.scope.org.uk/discussion/131944/heres-a-ready-made-letter-to-send-to-your-mp?\_ga=2.180880676.268870209.1743159865-598322369.1742554097
* The Green paper isn't very accessible for a lot of autistic people. We want to make this as accessible as possible for people to share their comments and experiences.
* Chinyere shared that she has had clinics where autistic people are struggling with PIP as they keep getting refused. There have also been situations where Adult Social Care have refused to help support a person. We need to look at our own local services and see how autistic people are supported through the adult social care system as well.
* Alexis suggested that the LDPB and the APB put together a response formally.
* **Suggested for June’s meeting:** Two agenda items only.
1. Go through workstreams
2. Discuss a joint response on PIP changes.
 | All |
| 4.15pm | **Learning Disability Partnership Update*** Christine updated that the LDPB are at the same stage as the APB. There have been discussions with board members over the past few months around what they want priorities of the strategy to be.
* The board want to focus on fewer priorities for the next year and be very clear on delivery group outcomes for the year ahead.
* Kelly advised that the board are also considering two co-chairs with the LDPB as this has been working well with the APB.
* Christine shared slides from the last LDPB.
* Themes that the board have decided on prioritising are as follows:
1. Living the life you want to live, safe and well
2. Accessibility - particularly in health settings
3. Transport
4. Developing a toilet map for Sheffield City Centre (This will be interactive)
5. Connected and engaged, inspire and achieve – Focusing around employment
6. Efficient and effective – Focusing on tech enabled care.
* Chloe advised that taxi training has just gone out for tender around the transport priority and asked if there is a way we can all work together around this and quality control it to avoid going back to square one and the bad training package that was in place before.
* Christine advised that reps for the priorities have not been chosen yet. This will be happening in June, so Chirstine will link back in with Chloe once this has been sorted.

  | Christine Anderson/Kelly Scargill |
| 4:30pm | **Technology Enabled Care for Information*** Due to other agenda items over running, the board ran out of time to discuss this agenda item, so the below appendix was shared for noting.
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| 4.40pm | **Any Other Business*** Nothing raised or discussed.
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Next Meeting: Wednesday 4th June: 10:00am – 11:30am