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| Autism Partnership BoardWednesday 31st May 2023Time: 12:30 – 2pmVia Zoom |
| **Present** | Alexis Chappell (AC) – Director of Adult Services – Sheffield City Council (SCC)Christine Anderson (CA) - Strategic Commissioning Manager, (LD, Autism, Transitions), Sheffield City Council (SCC)Janet Kerr (JK) – Deputy Direct or Adult Services – Sheffield City Counctil (SCC)Helena Lath (HL) – Team Manager, Sheffield City Council (SCC)Robert Carter (RC) - Senior Commissioning Manager - Sheffield Place (formally CCG), SY and Bassetlaw Integrated Care SystemsGraham Nield (GN) – Employment Group, Sheffield Autistic Society (SAS)Susan Kirkman (SK) - Family Carer / National Autistic Society Kelly Scargill (KS) – Autistic Adult/Development Worker, Disability SheffieldDavid Newman (DN) - Consultant Clinical Psychologist - SHSC - Learning Disabilities Services & SAANSEmma Tomkinson (ET) - Area Manager (North-West) Mental Health MattersRachel Dillon (RD) - Strategic Project Manager, Neurodevelopment ProgrammeKatie Toman (KT) – Autism network development lead, VAS, Chair of the Sheffield Autism Partnership Network, Autistic individualMelissa Simmonds - (MS) – Adult Autism Strategic Lead, VAS/Autistic Adult/Parent CarerLindsey Gleadhill (LG) - Parent of autistic children and Research sister at RHH adultsCharlotte Worthington (CW) – Sheffield Advocacy ServiceMary Vere (MV) - Parent Carer, LD Board Member, Healthwatch, Sheffield Carers Voice, Flash Sylvia Johnson (SJ) - Parent Carer and Coordinator of A-Team Social Group run by SAPAGJohn Kay (JK) - Parent carer / Autistic AdultAnn Mitchell (AM) – Senior Business Support Officer – Sheffield City Council (SCC) |
| **Apologies** | Suzanne Allen, Johanne Coates, Hannah Gill |
| **Chair** | **Alexis Chappell** | **Minutes** | **Ann Mitchell** |
| **Item 1** | **Welcome and apologies** | **Action** |
|  | Alexis Chappell, Chair, welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made. |  |
| **Item 2** | **Autism Partnership Board Structure - Christine Anderson** | **Action** |
|  | Christine explained that since the last meeting they have received further feedback from family carers and APB members on the proposed Board structure and co-chair role and selection process, for further discussion.The co-chair role will be advertised to autistic people through the Board’s networks, inviting expressions of interest. The role will be quite a commitment timewise and it was agreed to include a clear indication of the time commitment. The role could include outreach to communities to gather the views of autistic persons, rather than professionals doing this. A briefing session will be offered for those interested in the role.Alexis stated that the process of appointing the community co-chair would be transparent. She stated the person appointed needs to be committed to progress the work of the board. A Board member asked if the financial strains within Sheffield City Council could lead to merging boards within South Yorkshire in the future. Alexis responded that there are no plans to do this. She stated that the Autism Board is a fundamental part of the Council’s involvement work. She stated if we are transparent and involve people, we get better results. The board restructure will follow the co-chair recruitment. Open conversations will take place and a structure that works for all should be agreed. Connections will be made with Children/Young People and Adults as it is an all-age Board and strategy.It was noted that there is a Children and Young People’s group in the CYP Transformation programme which could work on the related objectives in the strategy. It was noted that the strategy includes a link to the Sheffield Autistic Society website which provides an overview of local services and support. Graham reported that they are finding it difficult to keep the website up to date, due to availability of volunteers. It was noted that websites would be included in the strategy delivery plan, including the Sheffield Directory listings for autism support and the Local Offer.The strategy will also feature the Sheffield City Council First Contact phone number. It was noted that other information sources are also needed for those who are not online. |  |
| **Item 3** | **Peaks College Closure – Alexis Chappell and Kathryn Littlewood** | **Action** |
|  | Kathryn explained that a decision had been taken to close Peaks College without any consultation. A meeting had taken place between the Director of Education and representatives of Peaks College but the decision has already been made that the college will close. Sheffield Voices and SAPN had received several concerns from families of autistic students who had received letters stating they will now have to attend Castle College. This has caused lots of anxiety for these students. Kathryn has arranged a petition to stop the closure and received over 600 signatures from worried families. Peaks College was a main-stream college that could support autistic children/young people. It was suggested that the centre could be made into an inclusive learning centre for all young people. Alexis suggested she could set up a meeting between herself, Kathryn and Andrew Jones, the Director of Education, to discuss this further.**Action: Alexis to set up a meeting between herself, Kathryn Littlewood, Katie Toman and Andrew Jones to discuss the closure of Peaks College.**  |  **AC** |
| **Item 4** | **Drop-in Centre – Emma Tomkinson** | **Action** |
|  | Janet Kerr took over the chairing of the meeting, as Alexis gave her apologies for the remainder of the session. Emma Tomkinson from Mental Health Matters gave an update on the new drop-in centre.There has been some positive community engagement since she attended the previous APB meeting. She stated their current priority is to agree a name for the centre. They have 22 different options for the name and also have a long list of words which they feel are important for the centre, which will be used in a mission statement. Autistic people are invited to attend a working group to agree the centre’s name on Tuesday 13th June. They will also discuss which days/times would be best for the drop-in centre to be open. Further focus groups will be held throughout June to help shape the new service. They are hoping to launch the centre in the autumn.  |  |
|  | **Any other business** |  |
|  | The minutes and actions from the last meeting were reviewed.**ACTION: Kathryn to follow up Brian Holmeshaw’s suggestion of linking with neighbourhood action groups to run cuckooing and mate crime training and to look at Violence Reduction Unit funding.**Alexis will contact Susan separately to discuss the DHSC and NHS England engagement on the national autism framework.Another councillor will be invited to attend meetings in Brian’s place.Christine, Susan and Sarah Fowler from Healthwatch will meet to explore how to carry out engagement work with people who communicate differently.Christine confirmed that Kate Josephs had received the Autism Strategy positively.Graham expressed concern that the Mental Health Teams are going through another transformation, as he felt this is not good for autistic people who are struggling with their mental health. He highlighted the importance of consistency of care and the difficulties of re-telling their story to new staff members which may cause individuals to re-live their traumas. Janet suggested an agenda item at a future meeting to provide an overview and explanation of the changes. She acknowledged that the service needs to improve on taking accurate notes of people’s experiences.The forthcoming changes in police support for people in mental health distress was also noted: they will be stepping back from attending incidents/crises unless it is endangering life, under the ‘Right Care – Right Person’ initiative. Janet confirmed that the police will still attend incidents which include dementia and vulnerable people. The police have reviewed previous incidents where they haven’t attended and problems arose, but the number of occurrences were limited. **MEETING CLOSED** | **KL** |