### Autism Way Forward

**Notes of the meeting held on Wednesday 29 April 2015**

##### Shaw Room, Civic Centre

10.00am to 12.00pm

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| 1 | **Welcome and Apologies**  Colin Elliott, Assistant Director for Adult Services, welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies received. |
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| 2 | **Minutes and Matters Arising – Meeting held on the 11 March 2015**  Minutes were read and agreed. The Autism Self-Assessment Framework, the Strategy and the Capital Grant are on the agenda for further discussion. |
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| 3 | **Capital Grant**  The group discussed possible uses of the Capital Grant. Following on from the previous discussion, the group agreed that there are two key areas where the grant might be put to good use;   * Supporting local groups already working to support local people with Autism. * Supporting plans to engage more people with Autism on the Strategy – holding workshops, or engagement / awareness events, or even promotional materials for wider community awareness.   The group noted that it would be useful to understand the terms / guidelines for the Grant, and to know exactly what the money can be spent on.  In terms of raising awareness, it was felt that the total grant monies available might not go very far, so it would also be useful to understand what sorts of costs a campaign might have. It might also be useful to understand the activity undertaken as part of the Dementia awareness campaign – and take some learning from this.  It was also noted that the 16+ Autism Group has been renamed the Autism Ambassadors Group. The group continues to struggle with demand and has a long waiting list.  In terms of local groups, and getting them to develop ideas for using the money, it would be good to develop an Expression of Interest Form for groups to complete / make suggestions for investing some of the money. The Expression of interest form could ask groups for ideas for taking forward some of the aims set out within the key themes in the strategy / or for engaging more people in developing it.  **Action: Michelle Hope to find out the terms for spending the Grant, develop a better understanding of costs for awareness raising campaigns, and develop an expression of interest form for seeking ideas from local groups** |
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| 4 | **Revised Terms of Reference**  The Group were happy with the contents of the Terms of Reference. Need to add what Autism friendly reasonable adjustments could be made to the running of these meetings, including changing the room (lighting poor), providing refreshments and a break.  The National Autistic Society has some good guides on this, and how to include people in meetings, including some useful training guides.  **Action: Mari to share these best practice guides with Michelle for planning purposes.**  It would be good to add these into the TORs, and implement these for AWF meetings going forward. Also good to develop an easy read version of the TORs.  Links to the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Board was discussed, and how it was important to ensure that links were being made between the two forums.  It was noted that there are links on the membership of the AWF group and the SEND Board, however attendance at this meeting has been patchy, and it might be useful to conduct a review of the membership, (also in light of the theme groups for the strategy), and set out some clear expectations of membership. It would also be useful to contact every member to understand what their intentions are in terms of attending this group going forward, and our expectations for attendance in the future.  **Action: Michelle Hope to change meeting rooms to one with better lighting, ensure refreshments are made, and include a break on the agendas**  **Action: Michelle to arrange Easy Read version of the TORs. This will also link into some Website information about the Group.**  **Action: Michelle to review the membership of the Autism Way Forward Group and bring back to the next meeting to discuss** |
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| 5 | **Update on the Autism Self-Assessment Framework**  Michelle Hope brought a summary of the results on Oldham’s Autism Self-Assessment Framework exercise. The paper sets out key areas where we need to improve, based on the questions asked in the Self-Assessment.  The new Government statutory guidance for local authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy was recently issued. It would be useful to discuss this with the group at the next meeting.  **Action: Michelle Hope and Gary Flanagan to add these actions to the action plans in the local Joint Commissioning Strategy – to ensure the strategy is reflective of the Self-Assessment**  **Action: Michelle Hope to plan discussion on statutory guidance at the next meeting** |
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| 6 | **Update on the Strategy and Theme Groups**  Michelle Hope from OMBC and Gary Flanagan, from NHS Oldham CCG, are working collaboratively to produce the Joint Commissioning Strategy. They are developing the sections of the current draft and will also include feedback from the Self-Assessment Framework Exercise. Both Michelle and Gary will support the establishment and development of the theme groups for the strategy.  Michelle Hope provided a document outlining the approach to implementing the theme groups;  The strategy has **four key themes**. Each theme has an action plan associated with that improvement area. It is proposed some time-limited groups are established to develop the themes and establish roles and responsibilities for taking forward actions in the strategy. The themes are;   * Joined up commissioning * Diagnosis and post diagnosis support * Getting the right support at the right time * Better information and awareness   **Each Theme Group would;**   * Agree and develop a clear understanding of how services could be improved under that particular theme * Agree the key actions that need to be implemented * Agree roles and responsibilities for actions * Agree timescales for completion of actions * Agree a process for monitoring completion of the actions * Report to the Autism Way Forward Group   The document also provided information on the proposed membership for each theme group.  The group agreed the proposals for theme groups, and also the associated membership.  **Action: Michelle Hope and Gary Flanagan to progress setting up the theme groups, and to progress developing the strategy.** |
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| 7 | **Any Other Business**  Mari from the National Autistic Society told the group about some initiatives currently taking place in Greater Manchester.  One initiative was an Autism Champions scheme in children’s services in hospitals. It was suggested that this might be good to see if we can have an Autism Champion in the Royal Oldham?  She also informed the group about “Take A Break” an initiative for young people with autism (and their families), getting them involved with sports and other activities at Oldham Futsal Arena. This session is held every Monday from 6-8pm. |
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| 8 | **Next Meeting:**  **Date:** Wednesday 29 April 2015  **Time:** 10.00am to 12.00pm  **Venue:** Lees Suite, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1NP **(Please note this meeting has been changed from the Shaw Room)** |