

BOLTON ADULT AUTISM SUPPORT

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 27th September 2017 at Thicketford Care & Community Centre

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman extended a very warm welcome to members present. He also extended a very warm welcome to our guest speaker Inspector Gail Spruce from GMP. Apologies for absence were received from Elaine Birch, Helen Green, Janet Thompson and Alison Thompson. There were 10 members present plus our guest speaker.

2. Presentation from Inspector Gail Spruce – Greater Manchester Police

Gail informed members she had been diagnosed only recently with autism. She felt that she had always been challenging as a child and then within the workplace, so she decided to complete the 'on-line' test. Confirmation of her condition subsequently enabled Gail to take on a special role within the force of improving the force's arrest and custody procedures and particularly to make them autism friendly and which now involves a two hour training module to all new police recruits.

Since this strategy has been in place it has reduced significantly the risk of violent behaviour and assaults and generally to improve better practice and greater understanding of autism spectrum behaviours.

The new process involves taking sensitive details at 'the booking in stage' establishing facts on arrest, ascertain if there are any ongoing health conditions including mental health or 'special needs' by asking multi-layered questions that are specific to someone with autism, this may also include the use of a sensory or 'quiet room'.

Custody suites now employ a state registered nurse/medical professional who are on hand to HELP make the initial diagnosis.

At the end of the presentation members were invited to ask a number of questions based on their 'own experience' which resulted in a lively and informative discussion.

The Chair and members then thanked Gail for a most interesting and enlightening presentation.

3. Presentation by Dr Pedro Vital – Bolton University on the 30th August 2017.

Effects of Ethnicity and Socio Economic status on the age at which a person receives an ASC Diagnosis.

Following Dr.Vital's presentation in August, the Chairman has received a request to partner research work into Autism being carried out at Manchester University which we have happily accepted.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 30th August 2017

The minutes of the above meeting were reviewed and accepted as a true record.

5. Matters Arising – none

6. Chairman's Report

- **Awards for All** application – The Chairman advised he was unable to submit a second stage application due to the fact that at this time we are unable to 'showcase' or produce evidence of our success of the Befriending Service due mainly to the long delays from NAS who were the preferred training provider.
- **Feedback on Dr. Vital's Research Programme** - to be forwarded when received from him.

- **AGM** - Notice will be given within the next few weeks.
- **Bolton CVS AGM on 30th October 2017** - The Chairman and Vice Chair to attend on behalf of the Group.
- **Befriending service** - NAS have now confirmed they are in a strong position to deliver the training modules. The Chairman confirmed that a number of advertisements for volunteers are now logged on various charity sites/University sites etc. We have to date received three expressions of interest. Funding for 2018 has already been submitted to the Post Code Lottery Charity and we have successfully secured a place on the second round of the bidding process (deadline 3rd October 2017). The Chairman also advised members that it was necessary to increase the Insurance premium to take account of extra risks/liabilities. The Chairman advised we are now intending to call our Befriending project 'Befriending Plus' to encapsulate a wider experience through enrichment and social value.
- **Barbara Brooks** to attend the Carers Networking Event at the Hub on 4th October 2017.

7. Carers Trips

The Chairman advised there are no further trips organised for 2017.

8. Dates of Next Meetings.

Thicketford Care & Community Centre at 2pm on Wednesday 25th October 2017

Drop-In at Commerce House 2-4pm on Saturday 28th October 2017.