

## **BOLTON ADULT AUTISM SUPPORT**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on June 28<sup>th</sup> 2017 at Thicketford Community and Care Centre**

#### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence.**

The Chairman extended a very warm welcome to members present and reported apologies from Janet Thompson, Alison Thompson, Elaine Birch, Debbie Newell and Christine and Robert Wood.

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting held on May 31<sup>st</sup> 2017**

The Chairman thanked the Vice –Chair for her conduct of the meeting in May during the absence of the Chairman who was absent due to his being on holiday. The minutes were accepted as a correct record

#### **3. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising that were not on this meeting's agenda.

#### **4. Chairman's report.**

The Chairman reported on meetings he had attended and gave brief feedback in respect of each meeting.

- i) **Carers' trips.** The Chairman reported on progress of the schedule of trips he had organised and urged members to decide on those they wished to attend as quickly as possible. The first trip was to be a canal boat trip starting from Lathom near Ormskirk and travelling to Parbold. Places were limited to 12 per trip and therefore a second trip scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> August had been arranged. The Chairman indicated there was an opportunity to arrange a final trip to either the Lake District or Chester Zoo. A show of hands clearly indicated a preference for Chester Zoo. The Chairman reminded members that the trips were supported by a grant of £1000.00 from Bolton Community and Voluntary Services organisation.
  - ii) **Equality Target Action Group meeting.** The Chairman reported on a most informative and useful meeting he had attended on behalf of BAAS. The meeting was held at the HUB and had been well attended.  
Presentation from Jean Haslam. Jean provided a personal and enlightening account of her experiences with Mental Illness. Support from family members and friends had been essential in helping her manage her condition. Her symptoms and her experiences have helped her work in the community, including being a founder member of Mhist and St Georges day centre. Currently she is also involved with Breakdown Bolton and Headspace where she had had experience of stand-up comedy.  
Other presentations included two from Bolton Clinical Commissioning group, namely, a survey of Diabetes services provision and the Bolton Care record involving the centralisation of patients' medical records.
5. **Short video.** The Vice-Chair showed a short cartoon type video from YouTube entitled What is Autism?. Everyone agreed the video explained very simply but effectively what Autism is. The Vice-Chair offered to provide copies to those members who wanted one.

6. **Autism Friendly Bolton.** The Chairman introduced this item by reviewing his involvement on behalf of BAAS relating to Bolton Council's determination to pursue an Autism Friendly Town status for Bolton. In this connection he asked members working in groups of two or three to write down their ideas and aspirations in regard to what they felt they would like to see in relation to Bolton becoming an Autism Friendly town over the next ten to twenty years. He asked them to think of their experiences to date in relation to challenges about employment opportunities including support in employment and in education; physical barriers to living happily and safely; use of transport and in accessing health facilities etc.

This brief exercise lasting some forty five minutes revealed lived experiences of and concerns around:

- Support during full and part time education and support during the transition to employment
- Support in housing and living semi-independently
- Outreach support
- Raising awareness of Autism and the challenges for families with members who have autism especially work employers ( in super-markets and stores and smaller shops) to be trained in autism( not just managers but all staff on a regular basis) preferably financed by the Council
- Autism friendly shopping times for parents and carers and those with autism including quiet time and turning down lights and no music and autism trained staff on duty to enrich the shopping experience
- Accessing everyday services- making non costly and often small changes to premises
- Supporting autism friendly groups and meetings by the council and organisations, e.g. rent free rooms
- Counselling and health services for people with autism
- Training volunteers to work with and support people with autism
- Greater recognition of skills and talents of people with autism
- Autism friendly signposting at Bus and Train terminals with pictorial view of the master route/s

In just less than an hour members revealed by way of personal experiences many ways in which the Council, work organisations and individuals can help in positive ways to help Bolton become much more autism friendly.

The Chairman thanked members for their very useful and insightful recommendations which he assured members would be fed back to the Autism Partnership Board.

7. **AOB.** The Chairman said he had a number of free tickets for the upcoming Autism Show to be held at Media City near the Trafford Centre. A number of members availed themselves of the offer.

The Chairman informed members of two video's from the NAS that had now been placed on our website, namely, a 'Police Guide to Autism' and 'Too Much Information'.

8. **Date/s of next meeting/s**

Wednesday 26 July and Drop-in Saturday 29th July