

BOLTON ADULT AUTISM SUPPORT

Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2019

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

There were eight members in attendance, namely; Graham Heywood (Chairman) Charlotte Horrocks, (Hon Treasurer) Elaine Birch, Barbara Brooks, (Hon Secretary) Roselle Gorman, Gerrard Brooks, Gerrie Melling and Rachel Nelmes, Befriending Plus service Coordinator. Apologies were received from Yvonne Poulson, Brian Ellis and Janine and Brian Robinson and Eira Heywood. Luke Bennett (Senior Programme Manager Brain in Hand) and Heather Warwick from Bolton Telecare attended the meeting as Guest Speakers.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 29th May

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th May were reviewed. These were accepted as a correct record but it was agreed that a number of typing errors be corrected before they were published on the website.

3. Matters arising from the above minutes

There were no other matters arising.

4. Presentation on Brain in Hand

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to Luke Bennett, Senior Programme Manager for Brain in Hand. Luke explained that Brain in Hand is mobile phone application that has been developed by University of Exeter for use by people with Autism and/or those with a learning disability. It is in the form of a diary that enables people to help better manage their daily routines. The application has been proven to reduce stress by up to 31%. It enables users to cope better with problems and feel more confident with an increase in meaningful activities including travel, school, work engagement and achieving set goals.

Luke explained that in Bolton 51 pupils across three schools and one college have been given Brain in Hand. Pupils reported a reduction in anxiety with fewer crisis events and greater ability to solve their own problems. It was also being made available for older people.

It currently costs £1470 to set up a full package that includes 2 weeks preparation/tuition and ongoing support. Support is available twenty-four hours per day seven days per week. However, Bolton Council and the CCG have funded a programme with **no charge** to the individual using it. They are providing the personal planning sessions (via Bolton Telecare) and the 24/7 support (via Careline). Luke highlighted a number of testimonies from around the country which pointed to positive mental health outcomes from users of Brain in Hand with reduced pressures on carers and consequent savings in health budgets.

Following Luke's presentation, he answered a number of questions from members and distributed application/referral forms which are to be completed by those wishing to access Brain in Hand. The Chairman thanked Luke on behalf of members for a very interesting presentation.

5. Befriending Plus Service update.

Rachel Nelmes Befriending Plus Service Coordinator presented a short report on this service.

- Rachel has interviewed 2 new potential volunteers by Skype. DBS checks will follow. Another Befriender has been recruited and now awaits a Befriender.
- Members agreed that we continue to support a Befriender who is at Bolton College (but who lives in Bury) and will be seeking employment in Bolton in the near future.
- The Mother of a new Befriender has herself expressed an interest in being a Befriender.
- A volunteer Befriending event organised to thank existing volunteers was held on 6th June. Rachel thanked those that had attended the event- Members congratulated Rachel on her imaginative preparations for this event.
- Preparations are nearly complete for the Befriending recruitment event to be held on 3rd July from 12.00 midday until 7: 00pm at the Hub. All members were invited to attend.

6. Carers Trips.

The Chairman informed members that the first trip will be to the Liverpool Liver Building experience on 18th June. The Coach will leave at 10:00 am prompt and the cost is £25.00 per person including transport. Payable 7 days before the event. On the 18th August a trip has been arranged to York and York Minster for which the cost will be £20:00 per person including transport.

7. Programme of Social Activities and Life-skills tuition.

The Chairman informed members that a poster will be produced (draft was available for viewing at this meeting) and distributed around Bolton and on Social media. A consultation event will take place on 25th July at the Thicketford Autism Centre from 7:00pm to 8:30 pm. The purpose of the meeting is to consult with people 18 plus and their parents/carers to obtain their views on what activities they would like to see offered.

8. Meetings attended by the Chairman since the May meeting.

The Chairman reported on meetings he had attended since the meeting of BAAS in May.

- Autism Partnership Board 3rd June

The Chairman reported that this meeting had been convened to review Bolton's draft Autism Strategy on which Bolton Council was currently seeking comments. The Chairman had at this meeting given feedback to members on the GMAC sub group meeting dealing with Housing issues held in May.

- Action for Ageing Assessment Panel 6th June

This meeting was to help assess grant applications from organisations seeking funds from The Health and Well-being Programme that distributes monies on behalf of Bolton Council. Grants are available to a variety of groups but applicants' applications have to meet certain criteria related to outcomes in well-being.

- Voluntary and Community Sector Forum 26th June

This meeting dealt with a number of topics including an update on Bolton's 20/30 Vision Partnership, amalgamating various health budgets across the NHS in Bolton and contributions from small member organisations on initiatives they are currently promoting.

9. Any other business

The Chairman informed members that all payments from our bank account are now done on-line. He went on to share with members the lengthy and troublesome dealings he had had with Lloyds Bank in achieving on-line banking which commenced in early November and had only just been achieved. He further informed members that he had lodged a complaint regarding the time and stress involved since this task had commenced. The complaint had resulted in Lloyds bank awarding BAAS £160 in compensation.

10. Date and time of next meeting

31st July 2019 at Thicketford Care and Community Centre commencing at 2:00pm