



<b>MINUTES:</b>	<b>Autism Partnership Board</b>
<b>DATE and TIME:</b>	<b>Thursday, 12th December 2024</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Moresk Centre, Kemp Close, Truro, TR1 3LJ also virtually via Teams</b>

### ATTENDANCE

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Karl Smith (KS)	Contracts and Performance Manager	Healthwatch Cornwall
Jamie Thompson (JT)	Partnership Board Administrator	Healthwatch Cornwall
Samantha Mokarram (SM)	Advocacy Coordinator	The Advocacy People
Marie Ralph (MR)	Director and Founder	Autistic Community of Cornwall
Steve Hillman (SH)	Health Improvement Practitioner	Healthy Cornwall
Paul Owen (PO)	Lived Experience, Health Champion	CHAMPS
Karen Hooper (KH)	Head of Commissioning for Working Age Adult Services	Cornwall Council
Vicki Allan (VA)	Commissioning Lead	Cornwall Council
Wayne Williams (WW)	Lived Experience, Self-Advocate	Mid-Cornwall Hub
Ryan Sturgees (RS)	Lived Experience	-
Carol (Ca)		

### ATTENDANCE via Microsoft Teams

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Cllr. Sally Weedon (SW)	Chair of Meeting	Cornwall Council
Lorraine Corrigan Turner (LCT)	Community Partner, Bude and Launceston	MENCAP
Sgt. Flo Linscott (FL)	Diversity	Devon & Cornwall Police
David Alkins (DA)	Lived Experience	Cornwall Council
Heather Davison (HD)	Lived Experience	DIVAS
Dina Holder (DH)	Community Engagement Manager DIVAs Facilitator	Women's Centre Cornwall, DIVAS
Christopher Burns (CBu)	Self Advocate and Disability Campaigner	-



### APOLOGIES

<b>Name</b>
Gemma Dyson

### ACTION LOG

<b>Actions Carried Forward</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
Role description and election process for co-chair role to be drafted	HWC	Ongoing
Easy Read version of the completed Cornwall Autism Strategy to be provided / distributed with the minutes	VA & HWC	Complete
Prepare workshop / discussion activity for the Q4 meeting in March 2025	DH & DIVAS	Awaiting Confirmation
Provide an update on further Safe Places implementation at the Q4 meeting in March 2025	SH / Zoe Webb Safe Places	Postponed

We have chosen to use 'identity-first' language when referring to autistic people. This means we say 'Autistic People' rather than 'people with autism'. This is based on system-wide feedback supporting that this is the preferred language used.

### MINUTES

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Teams Guidance, Meeting Etiquette and Introductions</b>	
	<p>SW welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that members online use the 'raise hand' function if they wished to speak.</p> <p>Expectations regarding meeting etiquette and general housekeeping guidelines were outlined.</p> <p>There were "round table" introductions and KS read out apologies received, as detailed above</p>	



<b>2.</b>	<b>Member's Updates</b>	
	<p>DH said that the DIVAS had done a joint webinar with the Highbury Trust who work with individuals with learning disabilities across Plymouth and with Link Up from Devon. Both of those organisations provide group work sessions and advocacy. The DIVAS talked about barriers. DH said that the DIVAS had also attended the Leeds National Rape Crisis Conference and talked to 60-70 people and that the feedback that they got was brilliant. People said that they "really wanted to come to Cornwall to see how we are doing". The DIVAS had now had 2 peer groups with a third coming in the new year (calendar year 2025).</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Safe Places Scheme &amp; ID Cards</b>	
	<p>SH from Healthy Cornwall gave an update and explanation on the Safe Places scheme including introducing Zoe Webb as the new Safe Places Coordinator in Cornwall.</p> <p>SH also explained new implementations to make the Safe Places scheme easier to access, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Roaming 'Safe Places Officers'</b> Similar to the Truro and St Austell Rangers, community officers will be trained and educated on the Safe Places scheme and nearby Safe Places locations</li><li>• <b>Safe Places Mobile App</b> A mobile application that offers a map of Safe Places locations. QR codes at public libraries, community centres and post offices would direct someone in need to the app</li></ul> <p>There were concerns from the group regarding the accessibility of those who may not be 'tech savvy'. It was suggested that librarians and clerks at the previously listed establishments should be trained to show people how to download and use the app.</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Safe Places Cards and Wristbands</b> A new version of the Safe Places ID Cards was shown, featuring tickboxes that detail the needs of the cardholder on the reverse, meaning someone who attends a Safe Place will not have to explain their needs</li></ul> <p>The group expressed concerns that the cards were too small to capture all aspects of someone's needs, however this had been considered by Safe Places who wanted opinions on a 'medical alert style' bracelet that includes a more in-depth description of the wearer's needs</p> <p>C? stated that the scheme required thorough integration so that it doesn't become a "scheme that does very little to deal with the problem", highlighting the isolation in Cornwall, particularly in East or Northeast Cornwall.</p> <p>The group discussed some integration strategies such as training videos on Healthy Cornwall's YouTube channel or networking through foodbanks and through community newsletters.</p> <p>Ch? raised a question regarding the creation of guidelines for making Safe Places quiet and relaxing for those with sensory issues, SH stated that the integration of new venues may introduce the opportunity to implement this.</p> <p>Ca? suggested for Healthwatch Cornwall to network with the Safe Places Scheme to highlight venues, events and support.</p> <p>CB Stated that Bude and Launceston are cut off and need to be highlighted and networked to.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Comfort Break</b>	
	<p>The board took a 10-minute break.</p>	



<p><b>5. Cornwall Council – Autism Strategy for Cornwall</b></p>	<p>VA from Cornwall Council explained the 'Cornwall Autism Strategy – 16 Years Plus' Strategy to the group, making an apology for the unavailability of an Easy Read version, this has since been completed and will be distributed with these minutes.</p> <p>VA outlined the aims of the strategy such as fostering inclusivity within living working and learning, improving outcomes and opportunities as well as the quality of services and pathways for timely diagnosis for autistic individuals. A more in-depth list is available in the standard version of the strategy which will be distributed with these minutes.</p> <p>VA reiterated that the strategy will not be the resource that directly makes a difference, but instead will be responsible for promoting and driving the difference systematically by investigating what is or what is not working for the autistic communities within Cornwall.</p> <p>VA presented statistics surrounding various aspects of the autistic community in Cornwall, such as employment, physical and mental health conditions, socialising, and health inequalities. The full statistics are available in both the standard and Easy Read version of the strategy.</p> <p>VA explained that the Cornwall Autism Strategy was coproduced by working groups attended by those with lived experience, professionals and carers to offer a wide range of perspectives. The working group identified various important themes such as terminology, understanding, better support, housing and the justice system are areas that must support and focus on the needs of autistic people.</p> <p>The Cornwall Autism Strategy is centered around 7 key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Improve Understanding &amp; Acceptance</b></li><li>• <b>Improving Support</b></li><li>• <b>Better Lives</b></li><li>• <b>Employment &amp; Education</b></li><li>• <b>Supporting Independent Living</b></li><li>• <b>Keeping Safe</b></li><li>• <b>Supporting Families &amp; Carers</b></li></ul>	<p>VA to provide Easy Read version of the Autism Strategy to be sent out with these minutes</p>
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VA explained how the strategy would be delivered:

- **'Champions'** centered around each of the priorities would drive forward the delivery of commitments
- **Cornwall Council** would lead commitments aligned with the autism strategy and other wider strategies
- **External partners** would lead commitments aligned with their organisations
- **Healthwatch Cornwall** would facilitate the actions within the delivery plan and hold the wider system accountable. They would also review, monitor and feedback on the strategy and delivery plan through the Autism Partnership Board meetings each quarter.

The board enquired about how they would be informed of the impact and feedback that may come as a result of the strategy and delivery plan

KS explained that each of the future Autism Partnership Board meetings will be themed around the 7 key priorities listed above and that each meeting will be attended by organisations relevant to each theme. This is part of the workplan highlighted in Item 6 of these minutes.

The board reiterated the importance of Easy Read material surrounding the Cornwall Autism Strategy and delivery workplan, also expressing the importance of explaining what certain words or phrases mean rather than omitting them entirely.

SH suggested that when a draft version of the strategy and workplan is complete, it should face scrutiny and receive feedback from the partnership board - the board approved.



<b>6.</b>	<b>Healthwatch Cornwall – Partnership Board Workplan 2025</b>	
	<p>KS explained the workplan for the Autism Partnership Board going into 2025-26. As aforementioned, each meeting will be themed around each of the 7 key priorities highlighted in the Cornwall Autism Strategy in Item 5 of these minutes.</p> <p>KS discussed with the board which was the most important priority to discuss for the next meeting taking place in March. The board agreed that the Keeping Safe priority would be beneficial after the Safe Places scheme discussion. DH from DIVAs added that 'Keeping Safe' doesn't only entail Safe Places, but also relationships and how to seek support through troubling relationships as an autistic person and the DIVAs could attend the next meeting to speak about this topic.</p>	<p>'Keeping Safe' in relationships as an autistic individual workshop to be drafted by DH and DIVAS</p> <p>Safe Places team to provide an update on networking and implementation</p>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	<p>KS briefly mentioned that interviews for individuals with lived experience to become co-chair for the partnership board may soon commence. The board were keen to have an individual with lived experience to be co-chair as a trial to becoming a chair.</p> <p>MR from the Autistic Community of Cornwall (ACC) spoke briefly about what their organisation does. Information cards that have a description of the organisation and useful contacts will be available at a signposting table at the next Autism Partnership Board meeting.</p>	<p>Role description and election process for LE co-chair to be finalised by HWC</p>
<b>END OF MINUTES</b>		

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