**
Meeting of Thurrock Adults Autism Action Group**

**Monday 3rd June 2019 - 1.30pm to 2:30pm.**

**The Beehive, West Street, Grays RM17 6XP**

**Present:** Ashley Woodward, CaPa (Co-Chair), Ian Evans, Director Thurrock Coalition **Apologies:** Mo James (PATT), Neil Woodbridge

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| **Topic & Discussion** | **Action** |
| 1. **Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**
* The meeting was opened and apologies were noted
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| 1. **a) Minutes of last meeting**
* The minutes of the previous meeting were read and agreed as an accurate record.
1. **Matters Arising**
* The Council are currently without a Commissioner with responsibility for Autism, Dementia and Mental Health (Zerina left the post in December 2018). The post has been de facto vacant since September 2016. We understand that the Council are recruiting to this post. The AAG would like to be involved in this process.
* The AAG has received no updates from Peabody (Family Mosaic) regarding the Medina Road Project
 | **Ian to speak to Allison Hall about timescales and AAG involvement in recruiting****Ian to request an update from Allison Hall re: Medina Road** |
| 1. **Thurrock Coalition - Autism Innovation (Capital) Funding – Project Development, Process & Next Steps**
* Ashley, in her capacity as Co-Chair of the AAG, has received an email from NAS Thurrock, requesting funding from the Autism Innovation Capital Funding monies – The funding request is for 7 Ipads, and internet access and travel training. However, the funding specifically relates to capital to make technology and places more accessible for people with autism.
* It was agreed for Ian to speak to John Paddick, CEO at Thurrock Centre for Independent Living to determine:
* How much money from the original grant is left, where it is and how best to enable the remainder to be spent for the benefit of the target group and how to manage the administration of any funding applications. It was suggested that a short pro forma application form be drafted.
 | **Ian to speak to John Paddick, CEO at Thurrock Centre for Independent Living****Ian & Ashley to develop a short pro forma application form** |
| 1. **Thurrock Coalition – Submission of evidence to the National Think Autism Update**
* Recently the government announced that it wanted to hear from autistic people, their families and their carers about their experiences of care and support.
* Consultation description - In April 2014 the government published ‘Think Autism’, a strategy for meeting the needs of autistic adults in England. The strategy supports the Autism Act 2009.
* This year the Department of Health and Social Care, working with the Department for Education, will review the strategy and extend it to cover children as well as adults.
* To help the DHSC do this, the government wants to hear about people’s experiences of care and support. The consultation ran from 14 March 2019 to 16 May 2019. The call for evidence was for England only, and was of particular interest to:
* autistic people – adults, children and young people
* their families
* their carers
* organisations and professionals that provide care and support to autistic people or work with autistic people.

**How Thurrock Coalition contributed and responded to the consultation*** Thurrock Coalition ran a consultation and engagement workshop in April 2019 with individuals with lived experience of autism, their family members, carers as well as representatives from Thurrock Coalition, Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions CIC, The Thurrock Autism Community Together project (TACT) The Parent Advisory Team Thurrock (PATT) (SENDIASS), and Thurrock Centre for Independent Living (TCIL) World of Work.
* Attendees were consulted and views were gathered around the key themes relating to the Think Autism review. The feedback appears under the headings indicated on the consultation documentation, namely:

• Being part of the local community• Getting the right support at the right time• Developing Skills & Independence, working to the best of abilities• Progress & Priorities for Future Action• Identifying the 5 most important things that the government should do to improve the lives of autistic children, young people and adults. Under each heading Workshop attendees considered what is working well and what is not working so well, and provided feedback in respect of each specific area.The DHSC has said they will use the results to find out where people think progress has been made and where more needs to be done in the future.The feedback is currently being analysed by the DHSC | **Ian to update the Group once the DHSC publish their response and next steps** |
| 1. **Results of the Survey on the how the Partnership Boards, Groups and Forums are working for people in Thurrock.**

The Consultation Results: Total Overall Responses: 90 - 82/90 Participants are Thurrock Residents42/89 Participants identified as having some form of impairment23/89 Participants identified as CarersIn terms of impairment types:38/63 Participants identified as having a physical impairment15/63 Participants identified as having mental health issues10/63 Participants identified as having a learning difference5/63 Participants identified as having a sensory impairmentThe majority of Participants said that:In order to find out about things that are happening in Thurrock that affect peoples ‘health and wellbeing, they want:People to come to their group/forum to talk about topics that are coming up and to listen and gather feedback (47 people - 55.3%)The topics that are up for discussion to be decided by the various groups/forums (46 people – 52.9%)To contribute views on the chosen topics at the various groups/forums that they already attend (41 people – 47.7%)To have the option of an online format (31 people – 35.6%)To attend a meeting in the morning (30people – 36.6%)Currently, the main barriers to participation are:* Transport/Travel (26 people – 37.1%)
* Not enough interesting topics (4 people – 5.7%)
* Timing of meeting (26 people – 37.1%)
* The place where the meetings are held (the venue) (13 people – 18.6%)

The "Top 3" Topics that participants said they would like to see discussed at any future meetings were:* Mental Health
* Local Area Issues I.e. Activities for younger people, local environmental issues, Local Housing issues, Future plans & Local transport.
* Health & Social Care including G. Ps, Hospitals and the closure of Orsett hospital.

**Option 1**Make no change to existing structures**Option 2**Establish an overarching Thurrock Partnership Board, to meet 3 times a year, with representation from the range of current Boards, Groups and Forums, primarily with individuals comprising: The current Co-Chairs, User-Led Reps of the range of community groups and networks in Thurrock, Disabled people (of various impairment types), parents, older people, family members, carers (sourced from a wide range of community groups and organisations in Thurrock), Third Sector Representatives, Healthwatch Thurrock, Assistant Director of Adult Social Care, Strategic Leads – Commissioning, Social Work, Elected Member – Portfolio Holder, Health (NHS) Representatives, CCG Representative, Public HealthThe Board should establish indicative membership spaces/places and should aim for at least50% of membership from Disabled people, older people, carers, family membersWe are proposing that the existing Forums including Thurrock Diversity Network, Speak Up for Your Age Thurrock, The Emotional Wellbeing Forum, Thurrock Autism Action Group continue to be vital consultation, engagement and co-productive groups that provide community voices which directly inform the priorities and work of the Thurrock Partnership Board.**How the Partnership Board could work in practice:**i) Thurrock Coalition to carry out an annual survey of community groups and networks to determine the topics to be addressed at The Partnership Board in the forthcoming year.ii) The Topics are organised and questionnaires are designed to identify specific areas of concern that can be addressed. The questionnaire on a given topic, for example “Transport" or "Accessible Housing" are taken to the range of community groups, networks, forums, societies etc., and runs for 3 months whilst results are gathered.iii) Feedback is gathered. The results are then analysed and issues identified. A Report &Recommendations is drafted which are then added to the agenda of the Partnership Board.iv) Specific representatives of providers and interested organisations are then invited to attend the subsequent Partnership Board. The Board will run as a "Town Hall" meeting/workshop where the issues and concerns identified from the questionnaire are discussed.v) The Thurrock Partnership Board suggests steps and actions for implementation and improvement. Recommendations are made and agreed. This could include, for example, a recommendation for co-productive work to be undertaken to improve services around hospital discharge.The Thurrock Partnership Board, represented by Thurrock Coalition could formally request a standing item on the agenda at the Thurrock Health & Wellbeing Overview &Scrutiny Committee at which the Findings, Recommendations and Actions are then reported as appropriate.Recommendation - That the respective Boards vote on the suggested options outlined above and any changes take effect from July 2019 (after one final round of meetings for each Board). The new Board to launch in October 2019. | **Ashley to attend the Thurrock Partnership Board, as Chair and representative of the Autism Action Group (which will continue to meet in its own right)** |
| 1. **A.O.B - None**
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 **Date/Time of Next Meeting: To be agreed – September 2019**