



**Notes of the Autism Norfolk Forum (ANF) Meeting**  
**Topic: The Norfolk All Age Autism Strategy Refresh**

**Held on: 13 December 2023**

**Venue: Online via Zoom**

**Please note: These notes represent an overview summary of this meeting rather than a verbatim transcript.**

<b>Name of Attendee</b>	<b>Organisation and/or Role</b>
Lee Gibbons	ASD Helping Hands, Norfolk Autism Partnership Co-ordinator
Karen Dures	Strategic Business Lead – Autism
Tracey Walton	Autism Commissioning Manager
<b>Members of the public (24)</b>	

<b>Agenda Item 1</b>	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>
1.1	Welcome and introductions made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This Forum was held using Zoom</li><li>• Communication prompts and their use explained.</li><li>• Acknowledged a note taker is provided.</li><li>• Norfolk Autism Partnership Board's (NAPB) Code of Conduct and Coproduction principles introduced and explained.</li></ul>

<b>Agenda Item 2</b>	<b>Update from the Board</b>
2.1	Lee Gibbons Provided an update on the Norfolk Autism Partnership
2.2	AN overview of the work of the Oversight board was given and the progress made on this. We are still looking at each of the oversight boards priorities and we hope to publish our live priority document in early 2024.
2.2	The Norfolk Autism Partnership has been working with partners to produce a resource pack for Families with neurodevelopmental difference and additional needs. This has now been finished and area available for download from: <a href="https://www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/reference-guides/">https://www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/reference-guides/</a>

	There are guides for both Norfolk and Waveney.
2.3	<p>The Norfolk Autism Partnership worked in co production with the Norfolk Adult Safeguarding Board to produce a 7 minute briefing about Autism and Mental Health.</p> <p>This is available for download on via:  <a href="https://www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/reference-guides/">https://www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/reference-guides/</a></p> <p>Members are encouraged to share this with any interested parties.</p>
2.4	<p>There is a new webpage on the Norfolk Autism Partnership website, that is dedicated to engagement and coproduction activities. This is updated regularly so that people can get involved with anything that may interest them.</p> <p>There is also an option to register your interest to receive notification when an activity is released.</p>
2.5	The forum was notified of the outcome of the tender for the Norfolk Autism Adult Support Service. The winning bid was from Realise Futures and the service is expected to begin in early January 2024.

<b>Agenda Item 3</b>	<b>Introduction to workshop</b>
3.1	This forum was focused on eh New Norfolk All age autism strategy refresh.
3.2	Tracey Walton and Karen Dures gave an overview of the work completed so far and the aim of this session.
3.3	<p>We asked participants two questions regarding each priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is important to you?</li> <li>• What changes would you like to see to improve things?</li> </ul>
3.4	Results of these discussion can be seen in appendix 1 at the end of this document

<b>Agenda Item 4</b>	<b>Wrap up and next steps</b>
4.1	Members were encourage to contact the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board should they wish to join the Autism Strategy Reference group on the main email : <a href="mailto:contact@norfolkautismpartnersip.org.uk">contact@norfolkautismpartnersip.org.uk</a>
4.2	There will be further engagement events between Jan and Feb 2024. This will be a mix of online sessions and face to face session utilising the library social groups.
4.3	<p><b>From March to June 2024</b></p> <p>The NAPB will work with the Autism Strategy Reference Group</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to understand the feedback autistic people gives us and agree the strategies key priorities and outcomes.</li> <li>to agree the wording of the strategy and plan</li> </ul>
4.4	<b>From early July 2024</b> The NAPB will deliver the refreshed Norfolk All Age Autism Strategy.

<b>Agenda Item 6</b>	<b>Any other business</b>
6.1	No other business was recorded

<b>Agenda Item 7</b>	<b>Close of Meeting</b>
7.1	The Norfolk Autism Partnership Forum was closed

<b>Date, time, and location of next meeting</b>
<p>The next Autism Norfolk Forum will be held on:  Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024 13:00-15:00</p> <p>Sign-up details will be posted to the Partnership's webpage and sent to members.  The topic of this forum has not yet been decided.</p> <p><b>Future Forum meeting dates:</b></p> <p>Tuesday 30 April 2024 13:00-15:00  Tuesday 02 July 2024 13:00-15:00  Tuesday 29 October 2024 13:00-15:00  Tuesday 25 February 2025 13:00-15:00  Tuesday 29 April 2025 13:00-15:00  Tuesday 01 July 2025 13:00-15:00  Tuesday 02 September 2025 13:00-15:00</p>

## Glossary

ANF:	Autism Norfolk Forum
ASD:	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASB:	Autism Service Norfolk
ICB:	Integrated Care Board

ICS:	Integrated Care System
EHCP:	Education, Health and Care Plan
FOIA:	Freedom of Information Act
GDPR:	General Data Protection Regulations
NAP:	Norfolk Autism Partnership
NAPB:	Norfolk Autism Partnership Board
NAS:	National Autistic Society
NCC:	Norfolk County Council
NCH&C:	Norfolk Community Health and Care
N&SFT:	Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust
SEND:	Special Educational Need and Disabilities
UEA:	University of East Anglia
WAW:	World Autism Week
WG:	Working Group
WG Lead:	Working Group Lead

## Appendix 1 – Results from discussion

### Priority 1: Improve understanding and inclusion of autism across the system and within society

Autistic Person

Parent /Carer

Professional

Through the questionnaire, people told us this priority can be achieved through:

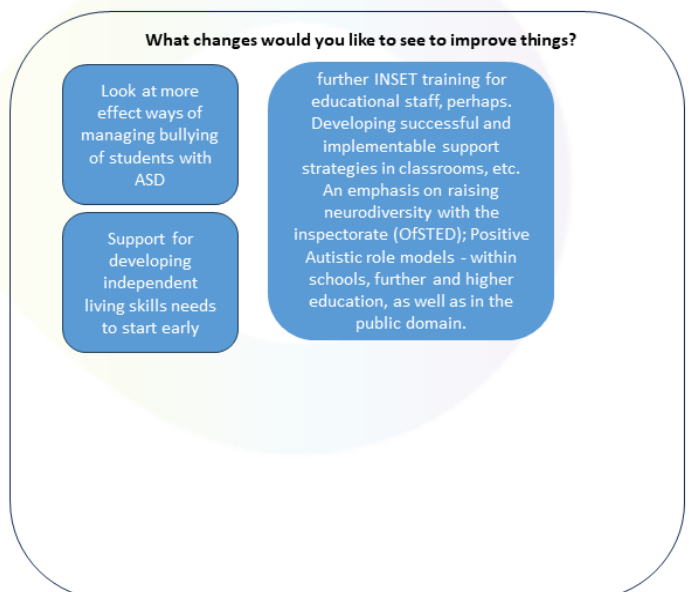
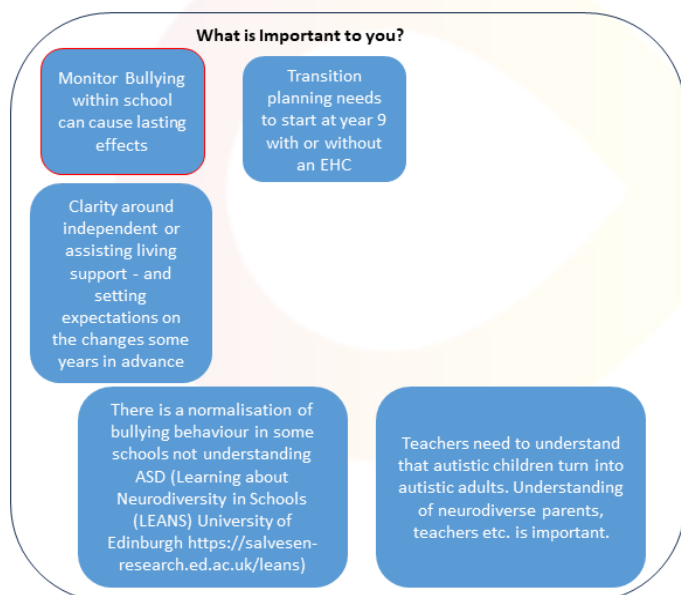
- Autism training
- Resources (directory of support)
- Reasonable adjustments
- Safe places
- Coproduction



### Priority 2 Improve positive transitions into adulthood

Through the questionnaire, people told us this priority can be achieved through:

- Autism resources in schools
- Better support in mainstream settings
- Preparing for Adult Life support starting earlier
- Support with independence skills
- Support to manage change

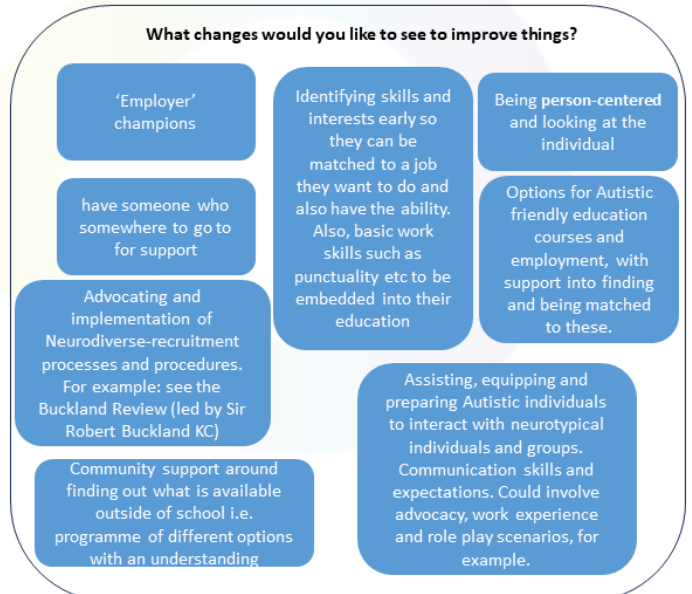


### Priority 3 Supporting autistic people into education and employment

Through the questionnaire, people told us this priority can be achieved through:

- Better support in secondary schools
- More specialist schools
- Resources for home education
- Understanding in the workplace
- Support to get a job

Raising Awareness of support/resources available



### Priority 4 Tackle health and care inequalities for autistic people

Through the questionnaire, people told us this priority can be achieved through:

- Timely diagnosis
- Post-diagnostic support
- Autism health checks
- Advocacy
- Support with health appointments
- Appropriate mental health support
- Mental health resources
- Joined up services



## Priority 5 Building the right support and supporting people in inpatient care

Through the questionnaire, people told us this priority can be achieved through:

- Autism social groups
- Autistic people providing support
- Support with independent living
- Support in a crisis
- Availability of ongoing support

### What is Important to you?

Transitions of 18+ going into hospital to help carers access

Range of accessible appropriate social groups

It's important to ensure that these groups and support are adequately funded so they don't unexpectedly disappear when people rely on them.

### What changes would you like to see to improve things?

Social groups, events and activities to be inclusive of autistic people

Transport support to facilitate the meeting of Autistic people

Door transport (Norwich)

Autistic friendly public transport

Quiet/safe/sensory areas

Suggestion: Attach a 'flag/marker' to patient records (transferrable between providers - GP surgeries, hospitals, etc.) to alert the range of healthcare providers that an individual requires specific support.

Adjustments in a ward environment if an inpatient. For example, provision of a side room for someone who struggles with the noise/lights in the bays on the ward. Provision of appropriate communication aids, and appropriate training to staff on the wards.

Autism Nurses like LD Nurses

## Priority 6 Improve support within the criminal justice system

Through the questionnaire, people told us this priority can be achieved through:

- Tailored programmes for autistic prisoners
- Support to prevent autistic people going to prison
- Support on release from prison
- Support into employment
- Data to understand the number of people in the Criminal Justice System.

### What is Important to you?

The reasons why Autistic people enter the justice system both as victims and offenders

Help so that Autistic people do not go into prison in the first place

Support before a crisis

### What changes would you like to see to improve things?

Independent Autism advocates for the Justice system to help with communication needs

Introduce pre court/Tribunal appearance familiarisation and awareness. E.g., pre-appearance visits, adaptations, advocates and communication. From experience: Suggest liaising with Norfolk Community Law Services (NCLS) for further guidance and advice.)

Interventions to support neurodiverse individuals to process life changing events, including grief.

Preparation to encounter and respond to rhetorical and leading questions.

Training for staff within the criminal justice system would be very beneficial. For police, probation service, prison service, resettlement workers etc. Could there be a possibility for a specific probation worker that is specialised in supporting autistic individuals? Often probation reviews are over the telephone now which isn't always accessible. Or the face to face reviews can be in environments that aren't sensitive to autistic individuals' needs.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-intermediary-services#:~:text=Print%20this%20page,About%20HMCTS%20intermediary%20services,steps%20needed%20to%20achieve%20them.>