

Norfolk Autism Partnership Communication Plan

The Communication plan is in place to enable members of the NAP Board to effectively and reasonably communicate with each other and the wider public. The majority of communications can be dealt with reasonably and without difficulty. Having a policy on how to deal with communications supports all partners and autistic members of the autism partnership board to demonstrate what is consistent and fair.

The NAPB has put in place a single point of contact to manage all communications to and from the NAPB. This approach puts in place an effective and clear communication. It aims to reduce members' confusion, excessive demand on time and resources and prevents a scattergun approach. It also clearly defines the process for recording boards and working groups and a process for challenge. The communication plan also covers behaviours that are unreasonable, which may include one or two isolated incidents as well as unreasonably persistent behaviour which is usually an accumulation of incidents or behaviour over a longer period of time.

For the purpose of this document, the following terms mean:

<i>Originator:</i>	The NAPB member who is providing the communication.
<i>Communications:</i>	email, fax, letter, verbal
<i>Administration/admin:</i>	contact@norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk

This document covers:

1. The process to communications across the NAPB.
2. To ensure all communications are dealt within a reasonable timeframe whilst being fair, open and honest.
3. Autism friendly format.
4. Abuse and unacceptable behaviour.
5. Communications with wider public and social media.

1. The Process for Communications across the NAPB

All communications regarding the work of the NAPB (board, working groups and open meetings) will come from and go to an email address with the domain of norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk.

The contact@norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk email address is the official communication for the NAPB business. All meeting invitations, agendas, documents will come from and go to this email address.

2. Reasonable timeframe

To ensure all communications are managed within a reasonable timeframe whilst being fair, open and honest.

For the official work of the Board or working group, members should direct their queries to the Co-Chairs or Working Group Lead via the contact@norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk or chairs@norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk email address.

It is common practice to acknowledge receipt of emails and where possible indicate a timeframe for when a response can be provided.

It is expected the person will be.

- Have their email acknowledged within 5 working days (excluding annual leave, non-working days weekend or bank holidays).
- kept up to date with progress and any change in timeframe.

To prevent the excessive demand on time and resources of all members of the NAPB, it is not appropriate to email everyone in all communications.

3. Autism friendly format

There is not one communication method that is considered autism friendly, as every autistic person will have their own communication style and face unique challenges in this area.

The Norfolk Autism Partnership Board consider autism friendly communications as:

3.1 All communications must be

- Font type: Arial
- Font Size: 12.
- Font Colour: Black

3.2 The communication where possible must:

- Use clear short sentences when giving information or instructions to someone with autism.
- Use clear, concise, specific, accurate and concrete language.
- Use words that are less ambiguous.
- Use plain English.
- Follow the NAPB code of conduct.
- Consider using the What, Why, How Who and When approach to communications:

WHAT	What are the real results we want to achieve?
WHY	Why do we want to achieve these results? What will be the benefit for various people?
HOW	How can we do our best to achieve the results. What are the approaches we can follow to give ourselves the greatest chance?
WHO	Who is involved and what will be the responsibilities of the various people and the spirit we want them to demonstrate to achieve the results?
WHEN	When will it happen? (date, time, location)

3.3 Watermarks must not be used. Any communications that would be used as a watermark must be held in the header or footer.

4. Abuse and unacceptable behaviour

To protect members of the board from abused and unacceptable behaviour. Communications that appear to be a loss of temper, shouting or using language that could be perceived as emotionally threatening or have a negative effect on the welfare of some of its recipients will not be accepted.

In these circumstances the person receiving the communication is not expected to respond to the email.

Refer to the **Code of Conduct** and **Volunteer Problem Solving** and where appropriate report the behaviour to the autism administrator, contact@norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk

5. Communications with wider public and social media

Only official NAPB communications agreed and authorised by the NAPB Co-Chairs will be available for the general public via face to face conversations, social media or the NAPB website.

NAPB members must not share on social media, with the general public anything that is not authorised by the NAPB Co-Chairs and includes:

- Sharing information about the NAPB business.
- Sharing of or discussing individual members' interactions with the NAPB.
- Campaigning against the NAPB.
- Not seen to be working in partnership with the NAPB.

This is in place to protect the NAPB and its members from reputational damage. Where such cases are identified the appropriate procedure will be followed. Refer to



the Code of Conduct & Volunteer problem solving and where appropriate report the behaviour to the autism administrator, contact@norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk.