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| Present | |
| Adam Russell (Co-Chair) | **R (Co-Chair - Ambassador)** |
| Savana Guy (Commissioning Support Officer Torbay Council) | Lorna Sinfield (Healthwatch) |
| Robyn Ferns (Guest Speaker) | Dawn Cox (Carers rep) |
| H (Ambassador) | Helen Dunlop (SW) |
| Katrina Hill (Social Prescriber) | S (Ambassador) |
| Kate Marks (D&C Police) | Trish Darke (Dimensions for Autism) |
| L (Ambassador) | Debbie Wilding (Adult Social Care, Torbay Council - Notetaker) |

Apologies Jo Williams, Jon Anthony, Ali Kingdon, Ali McCutchion (changed roles), Jude Pinder, Sharon O’Reilly

# Introductions and Apologies

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting; introductions were made, and apologies noted.

# Previous Minutes and Actions

The minutes from the last meeting were agreed by the group. Request made by the group for names to be in full rather than initials on the minutes. This was agreed.

# Future Meeting Dates

Due to availability for some members, Trish Darke asked if future meetings can be moved to Friday afternoon. The following dates were agreed as follows:

* Friday 23rd February 2024 at 2pm
* Friday 24th May 2024 at 2pm

Whilst these dates were agreed in principle, the group will need to see if this day and time works for everyone moving forward.

# Future Co-Chairing of the Board

Adam Russell thanked R for volunteering to co-chair today’s meeting but said he is keen to encourage that this group be user led by people with autism who can tell us where they want to be. Dawn Cox suggested before that could happen, there should be a skills event to train and mentor Ambassadors in chairing meetings as this will boost confidence. This was agreed by the group.

# Robyn Ferns – LIMA-Style Service for Torbay

Robyn Ferns was welcomed to the group and gave an overview of the LIMA service is currently being used in West Sussex. LIMA offers support to those individuals who have been newly diagnosed with the social skills people may experience on a daily basis. The Torbay service will be based in Paignton and will be piloted during May 2024. There will be 5 practitioners who will be supporting 130 people. The service will be for adults only. We hope that the pilot scheme will prove there is a need for the service in Torbay and Robyn Ferns will make connections and will link with Trish Darke. The service will also include members of the CAMHS Team and other Social Prescribers.

# Co-design and Visit – Torbay District Hospital

There will be a visit to Torbay Hospital on Monday 23rd April 2024. Savana Guy asked for volunteers to come forward to take part in a walk round and give feedback on what the service is like from an autistic person perspective. If anyone wishes to be involved, If anybody would like to attend, please can they email leanne.rafferty1@nhs.net Query raised as to whether assistance dogs will be allowed.

* **Action: Savana will ask Sharon O’Reilly if assistance dogs will be allowed.**

SOR has confirmed that assistance dogs are allowed to attend.

# Autistic After Hours Update

L gave an update that the new community interest company has now been registered with Companies House and there had been a small donation together with a small grant to start the company up, but further funding will need to be sourced. L said they were in the process of creating policies and procedures, a code of conduct and safeguarding. L said that a room had been booked for 1 Saturday in the month between 3pm – 5pm. The afternoon will be a relaxed social gathering and will include board games.

# Carers and Careers Group Update

Dawn and Sue informed everyone that the group had been going since June and meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the Carers Centre at Paignton Library. The sessions are bookable for 5 or 6 carers per time, and we are proud to say that we are seeing new people getting in touch with us to come along. We have 4-hour sessions available for either face to face or via telephone conversations. It must be noted that without this Autism Partnership Board, the Carers and Careers Group would not have started. It has been a huge success.

# Ambassador Recruitment

Trish Darke said this item will be left open with no end date until we have further Ambassadors who have been diagnosed. Savana Guy will revisit the advert and share. There is funding for a further 4 Ambassadors who need to be aged 18yrs and above. Adam Russell said he has links with South Devon College and S replied she is aware that the College is currently recruiting a new Autism Lead. S expressed that people with autism are often discriminated in the workplace as employers often look at what autistic people can’t do, rather than what they can. Autistic people can offer employers a talented workforce if they are willing to make reasonable adjustments. Adam Russell will link with S to look at options at South Devon College. Discussion took place on whether Ambassadors should be paid for their role they do as they give up their time. Adam Russell said this is something we would like to do but will need to be discussed away from this meeting.

* **Action: Savana Guy to revisit the advert and share as soon as possible.**
* **Action: Adam Russell to link with S to look at South Devon College options.**

1. Workstream Meeting

Unfortunately, Sharon O’Reilly and Jude Pinder were unable to be present today. But Sharon had met with the Ambassadors and taken notes of workstreams that the Ambassadors wish to focus on.

1. Oliver McGowan Update

Oliver McGowan training is delivered by people who have lived experience of having a learning disability and autism. So far, 27 people have attended. Although the training is very intense, people have found it positive. It has been interesting to see professionals coming along to the training. All training places are now fully booked. H said she was proud to be part of it and help people realise what autism is. H is now an Oliver McGowan trainer herself in a paid role. There are now 3 trainers based in Torbay and another 1 in Devon who hasn’t started yet. H asked why Ambassadors are not paid as discussed in point 9 above. Oliver McGowan pays trainers for their time, and this could have an impact on recruiting new Ambassadors if consideration is not given to pay them for their time.

# Procurement Update

Adam Russell explained to the group that the DFA contract is coming to an end at the end of the financial year. We will soon be going out to tender soon for a new provider. We would like the Ambassadors who have real life experience to be involved and think about a question which will be put to the bidders as part of the process and will be able to score the bidders response.

One of the core principles of public sector procurement is that it is subject to a legal framework, which is designed to encourage free and open competition and value for money. As outlined in government guidance on public procurement policy, the process must meet the principles of:

• Equality of treatment

• Transparency

• Mutual recognition

• Proportionality

L asked if consideration had been given on the impact any change in provider could cause. Adam Russell said yes, we have considered this very carefully and that any change will not happen until April 2024, and we will ensure there will be a transition period if a new provider comes forward to avoid disruption.

1. CQC Assessment Update

Adam Russell gave an overview on the CQC Assessment on Sharon O’Reilly’s behalf. Adam Russell explained that the CQC started reinstating inspections 3 years ago. The CQC will use it to assess how well local authorities are performing against their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. This will be the first inspection in 13 years. There will be 9 weeks’ notice for the inspection to take place.

# 14. AOB

No other business was discussed. Adam Russell thanked everyone attending and R for Co-Chairing the meeting.

**Date of next Meeting:** Friday 23rd February 2024 at 2pm

# ACTIONS

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Timeframe** | **Status** |
| 1 | AR to investigate scope, funding, and process for hiring additional sensory OT’s. | Adam Russell | Next meeting | In progress |
| 2 | RW to share the post implementation review with colleagues (OT’s). | RW | ASAP |  |
| 3 | SG to circulate information regarding the ‘carers rights’ day on November 18th. | SG | ASAP | Complete |
| 4 | JM to investigate the process of issuing the Health Passport to newly diagnosed individuals. | JM | Next meeting | In progress |
| 5 | AR to circulate the letter from Sonja Manton, detailing information on the planned inpatient units with the group. | Adam Russell | ASAP | Completed but AR will confirm |
| 6 | Kate Marks to attend the next DFA and Carers meetings and develop a communication strategy for information on exploitation and grooming. This will then be shared with the group. | KM | Next meeting | In progress |
| 7 | EM to circulate information about how to be involved in the social care webpages development. | EM | ASAP | In progress |
| 9 | Savana Guy to speak to Sharon O’Reilly if assistance dogs will be allowed on the Hospital walkaround | Savana Guy | ASAP |  |
| 10 | Adam Russell to link with S on South Devon College options | Adam Russell and S | ASAP |  |

# COMPLETED ACTIONS

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| **No** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Timeframe** | **Status** |
| 1 | Adam Russell/SG/ALC/Trisha Darke to facilitate Richard (Ambassador) to be Co-chair of the board. | Adam Russell/SG/ALC/Trish Darke | Next meeting | Completed |
| 2 | LS to share the LD boards feedback on the inpatient units with SG to circulate to the group. | LS/SG | ASAP | Completed |
| 3 | Trisha Darke to email Adam Russell with the current requirements for the Leisure Card and funding needs, and Adam Russell to try and progress this with relevant colleagues. | Trisha Darke/Adam Russell | ASAP | Completed |
| 4 | Trisha Darke to send information regarding additional guest members for the next meeting to SG/ALC and SG/ALC to facilitate this. | Trisha Darke/SG/ALC | ASAP | Completed |
| 5 | TD to send information regarding additional guest members for the next meeting to SG/ALC and SG/ALC to facilitate this. | Trisha Darke/Savana Guy/ALC | ASAP | Completed |

# SUCCESS STORIES

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| **No** | **Success Story** | **What is the Impact** |
| 1 | Carers and Careers Group | Helped understand sensory and communication amongst the Autism community. |
| 2 | Leisure Cards | The Leisure card is now being offered to the Autistic community, and Ambassadors are being consulted to help communicate and implement an application process that works efficiently for everyone so the card can be enjoyed by all. |