



## West Sussex Autism Partnership Board (APB) Minutes

**Meeting:** Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 11am – 12.45pm (online Zoom)

### **Attendees:**

Lisa Loveman (Chair) – Commissioning Manager (WSCC)  
Anna Lansley – ASSA; Aspie Trainer  
Jayne Simpson – Parent carer  
Andy West – Impact Advocacy Supporter for ASSA  
Martin Ford – Aldingbourne Trust (manager of My Network & LIMA services)  
Mike Smith – Commissioning Officer (WSCC)  
Dan Gregory – Asperger’s Voice  
Harriet Wilson - Impact Advocacy  
Mark Bushby – Independent self-advocate  
Bodil Scrivens – Parent carer  
Rosie Froget - Impact Advocacy Supporter for Aspergers Voice  
Graham Sargent – ASSA  
Suzana Sheppard – Carers’ Wellbeing Support Worker for Carers of Autistic Adults (CSWS)

### **Apologies:**

David Henderson – ASSA  
Roxanne Hall – Asperger’s Voice  
Warren Ball – Autism Specialist (SPFT)  
Dr Dawn Howard – Clinical Lead Neurodevelopmental Services (SPFT)  
Pranay Chakravorti - Interim Senior Mental Health Commissioning Manager (West Sussex CCG)  
Maggie - Asperger’s Voice  
Katie Green – Asperger’s Voice

## **Notes and Actions**

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Welcomed Suzana to her first APB.

### **2. Update on actions from 31/03/22**

Action on page 1 – Sussex LDA Shadow Board – further details about meetings previously shared. Jayne and Ana volunteered to be put forward to join from West Sussex when the Board next opens membership. APB agreed their nominations.

Action on page 4 – Recruitment & Retention Priority 4 - Lisa has met with the Proud to Care Team who support West Sussex organisations with recruitment of

care and support staff. They have a video about [learning disability lived experience](#). Team could look at autism case stories but felt this wasn't best way to achieve objective. ASSA had come to the same conclusion and thought it could come across as condescending. No volunteers have been identified.

Member felt that organisations could benefit from involving people with a lived experience more in the recruitment, induction, and training and this could help retain staff. Organisations are still not consistently doing this. Lisa has a copy of the Proud to Care [Retention Guidance](#) and will check if this is covered and if not ask if it can be included.

Did not discuss online 'Autism Week' event for 2023. This needs to be rolled over to next meeting.

**Minutes** – the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 were approved as a correct record and there were no objections to them being published on the WSCC APB webpage.

### **3. Understanding Autism Event 2022**

Harriet reported back on the event held earlier in May. The event was fully booked (44 places). Very positive feedback on workshops and meeting face to face was welcomed by most. 32 people attended and they think the drop-off was because people were perhaps more anxious about attending on the day as several cancellations. There were information stalls to visit during the lunch break and included LIMA and DWP. A recording of the workshop presentations will be available to those that couldn't attend in person and Harriet will ask Aspergers Voice if they can be shared more widely e.g., with Carers Support.

Some carers asked if they could attend the workshops as participants, but the event was only for autistic adults and supporters if needed.

Member asked Aspergers Voice to review if it was clear enough that people could attend with a supporter.

Going forward carers could be signposted to the PAPA training programme and Suzana will look at the workshop topics to see if these are reflected in PAPA programme or could be added.

2023 Event – this can go ahead if Aspergers Voice can raise the funds. This year the event cost £2500.

### **4. Support for Carers in West Sussex**

Suzana is the Mental Health Lead at Carers Support West Sussex. A new Autism Lead (32 hours per week) has been appointed and Lucy Watson will join the

APB in July. Lucy and Suzana are both parent carers. Lucy's role covers the county.

### [Suzana's presentation slides](#)

Discussed role of organisations in identifying carers and sharing information about the offer of support. Member asked about Carers Support presence in Mental health hospitals. Suzana said there were Carer Leads in each unit and their role is to refer to CSWS, at this point a Carers support worker would make contact. Suzana will find out what happens when the carer is based in West Sussex but the cared for is in hospital in another county. Member had received a carers pack when cared for in ATU but following being given this had felt forgotten.

Member asked if counselling sessions were 1:1 or could include the autistic person as well. Suzana confirmed that all services were carer focussed, however carer would be signposted to services and support where this is needed for the cared for.

## **5. Task Group updates**

The following Task Groups are underway:

### **Priority 1: Employment and volunteering**

DWP are looking in autism accreditation in advance of this being rolled out nationally following pilot, covers improved access and services. Member has done some targeted work with Bognor Job Centre.

Equipping Employers - looking to do work with Adur and Worthing Council who want to get their Level 3 Disability Confident Award. This requires them to lead other organisations on their disability confidence journey. Other employers are being identified and member is looking to expand work done at Albion in the Community.

### **Priority 3: Health and Social Care working more closely together**

Lisa shared [slides](#) from this groups first meeting. ASSA and Aspergers Voice to ask if anyone else wants to join the task group.

Members said all 5 ideas were important but 1 and 5 were considered biggest issue - all 5 could be inter-linked e.g. delays in autism diagnosis can impact access to mental health support and referrals to social care assessment.

Self-advocacy groups to discuss list at their next meeting and let the task group know which idea to focus on.

### **Priority 5: Annual Health Check quality check**

A draft questionnaire is being finalised ready to send out next week. Long list of recipients drawn up.

## **6. Member updates and any other business**

ASSA are doing some work to raise profile of people with medium to higher support needs because they feel the media has misrepresented autistic people as having 'superpowers' and special gifts. ASSA will look at ways to show that people are all different and there needs to be equality in meeting support needs.

Member brought to Boards attention new benefits adviser post for under 25's in 'Reaching Families' following retirement of Robert Hayes in WSCC. Carers Support and the My Network Hubs also have a specialist benefits adviser.

Member had followed up with SPFT to find out how the autism and anxiety research study was being used to improve treatments. She has not been able to find this out and Suzana offered to try and find out in her weekly catch-up's with SPFT. This Member has joined the Kent, Sussex and Surrey Applied Research Collaborative who are involving people with lived experience to understand how research is being applied and whether things are getting better as a result.

Member is part of an OCD lived experience project within SPFT. She will be delivering a presentation to the group about raising awareness about autism and OCD and talking about avoidance.

Martin said that LIMA has started to do some face to face and from June the face-to-face meetings would all resume.

## **7. Date of next meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> July 11am – 1pm online.**

Meeting closed at 12.45pm.