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| **5th August 2015** | **Minutes of the meeting of the Thurrock Autism Action Group (AAG)**  **10am to 12 noon, Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL** |
| **Topic** | **Discussion & Agreed Action Points** |
| 1. Welcome, Introductions, Background | Welcome by Ashley Woodward (Co-Chair). Introductions by: Mo James, Parent, Carer, CaPa and Parent Advisory Team Thurrock (PATT), Ian Evans, Director, Thurrock Coalition, Katrine Basso, Individual, Christine Ludlow, Parent, Carer, Advocate Thurrock Centre for Independent Living (TCIL).  Apologies from Tom Walpole, Molly Sage, Matthew Wright, Andrea Walter, Sharon Alison. Allison Hall (Co-Chair), Neil Woodbridge |
| 1. Action points from 5th May meeting | * Neil has invited Leigh Norris (District Commander, Essex Police) to the November Autism Action Group (AAG) meeting to discuss the Criminal Justice System and pathways as they affect people with Autism. * Neil has advised that the SPECTRUM Social group will be re-launching in September. * Matthew Wright has devised the Questionnaire which aims to find out peoples’ views and ideas on how best to spend the Capital Grant Funding so that it is effectively representing what people would like to see available in Thurrock. (See more Thurrock-specific details below). * **Action: Neil to provide update on SPECTRUM at the November AAG meeting.** |
| 1. £18.5k Capital Funding   Update on actions and progress | This was funding from Central Government for local authorities. It is a grant of £18,500 capital funding made available by the Department of Health to each local authority to make local areas more autism-friendly. This could include improving buildings or buying relevant equipment. Local authorities will need to work with their local autism partners to agree how best to use the grant. Previously, the AAG had discussed sending out the Survey to gather views and ideas on how/what to best spend the Grant on, in a way that reflects local needs. To analyse the feedback and to hold an event with several speakers/equipment exhibitors to see any technology and equipment in action, so that a selection could be bought and then offered for loan/hire as part of a new equipment service.  The Group discussed the need for sufficient time to plan the event in response to the results of the Survey. The Group suggested the following timeline as a way forward:   * To postpone the Event originally planned for September 2015. * To upload the survey questions and make them available electronically. * To allow a month for people to complete the survey (mid-August to mid-September 2015). * For the AAG to hold special meeting at the end of September 2015 to analyse the results and to plan the Event to take place at the end of October 2015. * **Action: Neil to send Survey to Ashley and Ian to put up on the Internet.** * **Allison Hall to send the link to the Survey to every individual with Autism, their families and carers who are known to Adult Social Care.** * **Katrine requested a hard copy of the Survey** |
| 1. Autism Strategy - moving the strategy action plan forward with tasks for the action group | Ashley and Ian shared the “Consolidated Action Programme” with the group for discussion. Katrine highlighted the importance of training and awareness, particularly around training on support for older people who receive a late diagnosis, as the focus tends to be on younger people.  Christine mentioned that SEPT services in this area tend to cover 18-30 year olds. The group thought that providing Training for Champions was a good starting point, and that any Points of Contact would need to be adequately and sustainably resourced by the Local Authority and its statutory partners in order to be effective.  The Group took the view that the following would be ideal Champions and would require relevant Training:  Third Sector Staff, GPs, Local Area Co-ordinators, the Community Solutions Team, Housing, Transport, Education Providers.  Christine has previously observed the NAS Autism Training commissioned by Thurrock Council and whilst it was very good and informative, there was not enough emphasis upon how/where/what practical support to offer a person with Autism.  The group needs to identify what the training content would be and to co-produce this with the Thurrock Council Workforce Development Team (Suggested Bill Clayton)  **Action: Allison Hall to invite Bill Clayton to the second half of the next AAG in November 2015 to jointly discuss content of the training for the Autism Champions Programme.**  The group agreed it would like to hear from other Partners as to how they are progressing/achieving actions from the Autism Strategy and that relevant Representatives should be invited to AAG meetings, each would have a specific theme, e.g. Housing, Criminal Justice, Education etc.  **Action: Allison Hall to be responsible for inviting relevant Partners to specific meetings from time to time and to highlight the Statutory footing of the AAG to ensure attendance** |
| 1. A.O.B.   (Including next meeting date) | Allison Hall will be changing roles and will ensure that the group is updated on who will be Allison's replacement for the group.  The Group discussed the importance of members of the group from individuals, carers and family members taking primacy over representatives of Service providers. The Group agreed that any Service providers who wish to attend the AAG should be supporting people with Autism in Thurrock and attend meetings along with individuals, family members or carers that they support.  **Action: Group to meet for results analysis and event planning meeting in late September. Date to be arranged.**  Future Meeting Date: Wednesday 4th November  10am – 12 midday  Thurrock Council, Civic Offices  Committee Rm 1 |