East Sussex Autism Partnership Board

Terms of reference

1. Purpose of the group
   1.1 The Autism Partnership Board is a consultative body of stakeholder representatives committed to working together to help individuals with autism and their carers in East Sussex lead more fulfilling and rewarding lives.
   1.2 East Sussex County Council have established an Autism Partnership Board in response to the Autism Act (2009) and the National Autism Strategy (Fulfilling and rewarding lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England – 2010).

2. Definitions
   2.1 It is recognised that there are a number of different terms used to describe autism, for example, autistic spectrum disorders or conditions, Asperger syndrome or neuro-diversity. For consistency with the national strategy and guidance, and the Autism Plan for Adults in East Sussex, the term ‘autism’ will be used in the context of the Autism Partnership Board.

3. Aims and responsibilities
   3.1 To develop and agree the Autism Plan for Adults in East Sussex 2013 to 2015.
   3.2 To govern the implementation of the plan to ensure its effectiveness and that it remains responsive to local need and national guidance and requirements.
   3.3 Through a well developed model of involvement, capture the widest possible range of client and carer voices.
   3.4 Share and disseminate information about the development of services and best practice examples to promote the improvement of services.
   3.5 To be advised on the use of future grant funding, where available, to be consulted on services that meet the objectives of the plan.
   3.6 Link with other partnership boards in East Sussex to ensure they are kept up-to-date with the work of the Autism Partnership Board and that issues falling outside the remit of the Board are passed on to the appropriate group.
   3.7 Link where appropriate with Autism Partnership Boards in other local authorities and the regional Autism Network, to share ideas and best practice.

4. Membership
   4.1 Stakeholder groups represented on the Autism Partnership Board:
       - Individuals with autism
       - Family carers
       - Director of Adult Social Care
       - Adult Learning Disability Commissioning
       - Adult Mental Health Commissioning
       - Adult Carers Commissioning
4.2 Other representatives may be invited to attend as appropriate to the work of the Board.

4.3 Members who cannot attend meetings of the Board should make this known in advance and where possible, organisations should send a suitable substitute (by prior arrangement).

4.4 Members of the Board must adhere to the ground rules relating to behaviour and communication established by the Board. If they do not they may be asked to leave the meeting or step down from the Board.

4.5 Recognising the potential for a conflict of interests, provider representatives must ensure they do not explicitly or tacitly use the Board as a platform to promote their own organisation. If they do, they may be asked to leave the meeting or step down from the Board.

4.6 Meetings will be chaired by the Director of Adult Social Care.

4.7 The Board will not be quorate unless two representatives from Adult Social Care, one provider representative, one representative of individuals with autism and one carer representative are in attendance.

4.8 Notes from the meeting will be available on the Council website: www.eastsussex.gov.uk

5. Client and Carer involvement and representation

5.1 The Board should include in its membership a balanced number of client and carer representatives.

5.2 A model of involvement (see appendix 1) will be developed that enables individuals with autism and carers to provide their views on the Autism Plan and work of the Board in advance of meetings of the Board and in a range of different ways.

5.2.1 Agendas for each meeting will be made available on the council website and circulated electronically to anyone wishing to receive them.

5.2.2 An involvement tool will be developed and trialled, aimed at helping individuals and groups think about and provide views on issues and questions relating to specific elements of the autism plan once it has been agreed,

5.2.3 People will then be able to provide their views in the following ways:

- By email to the autism inbox: autism.adults@eastsussex.gov.uk;
- in writing;
via an online forum (hosted and moderated by a non-ESCC organisation) for individuals with autism and one for carers of people autism;

- through existing and newly established support groups for people with autism and carers; and

- through learning disability and mental health-specific involvement groups.

5.3 This model of involvement will be reviewed after the first year of the Board’s existence.

6. **Meeting arrangements**

6.1 The Board will meet three times per year.

6.2 Meetings will take place from 10.30am to 1pm, including a comfort break.

6.3 Meetings will take place at a location central to East Sussex that is deemed to be accessible, have adequate IT facilities, good public transport links and sufficient parking availability.

6.4 The Autism Project Group will aim to send all papers a minimum of one week prior to meetings of the Board.

6.5 Responsibility for taking minutes for the meetings will sit with Adult Social Care and agreed by the Board at the following meeting. Draft minutes will be agreed by the Director of Adult Social Care, made available on the council website and circulated to members of the Board within one month of each meeting.

6.6 Actions agreed by the Board will be recorded in the meeting minutes. The person or people responsible for each action will give an update on progress against the actions when the Board checks the draft minutes.

7. **Papers and presentations**

7.1 Papers and presentations should be written in Plain English.

7.2 There may be occasions when Easy Read format papers or presentations are needed. The Learning Disability Commissioning team can advise on production of Easy Read material.

8. **Review**

8.1 This Terms of Reference will be agreed at the first meeting of the Board and reviewed annually.
Appendix 1: East Sussex Autism Partnership Board
Model of Involvement

Information and tools
- Minutes from meetings
- Agendas
- Involvement packs
- ESCC website

Autism Involvement Network
- Individuals with autism
- Carers of individuals with autism
- Autism support groups
- Carer support groups
- Learning disability involvement groups
- Mental Health involvement groups
- Service providers

Communication channels
- Email: autism.adults@eastsussex.gov.uk
- Autism Partnership Board, B Floor, North Block, East Sussex County Council, County Hall, St Anne’s Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE
Autism Sussex online forums:
  www.asfamilysupport.org.uk/messageboard
- Online forum for individuals with autism
- Online forum for carers of individuals with autism
- Care for the Carers
- Email: info@cftc.org.uk

East Sussex Adult Social Care Partnership Boards
- Learning Disability
- Mental Health
- Older People
- Carers
- Improving Life Chances (long-term conditions, physical/sensory impairments)

Autism Partnership Board
- Individuals with autism
- Carers of individuals with autism
- Provider representatives
- Statutory organisation representatives

Autism Project Group