

Representatives Feedback Form

Volunteer Name: Diana Elliott

Name and date of meeting attended: Bristol Autism Forum, 20 July 2017

Number of attendees: 9 Chaired by Mike Davies, Councillor - co-chair and Autism Champion. Facilitated by Helen Pitches.

Time spent (incl. reading & travel time): N/A

Healthwatch Feedback

Information Taken to Meeting (from Healthwatch)

None

Main items to feed back to Healthwatch

Minutes of the meeting will be put on the Bristol Council website.

Mike Hennessey has left the Council. His replacement, Terry Dafter, will be co-chair of the Forum – but he was unable to attend this meeting.

A group of autistic adults have met at the BASS advice service to comment on the minutes of the last meeting and raise some points. This included wishing to know the purpose of the Forum and who attends/or should attend. (see AOB below)

A **report** has been published giving a summary of the Self Assessments completed by virtually all the Local Authorities in 2016. Link to the report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autism-self-assessment-framework-exercise>

The **Autism Action Plan** – the first 4 points were briefly discussed:

1. Awareness & Understanding

BASS delivers training to Council employees, including social workers, and also other organisations. Work needs to be done to identify who is receiving this training and therefore if there are gaps of workforces or organisations who could be approached to offer training. Two members of the group will also do an internet search for training info to see if the information comes up when searched for by different people eg social worker, care support worker, carer, autistic person etc.

GP & Hospitals – more needs to be done to increase understanding of autism by GPs and Hospital staff.

Website – a member of the group will look at the information on autism and the Forum on the website and make suggestions.

2. Access to Diagnostic & Post diagnostic services

For children it is felt sufficient resources are available to provide an assessment – no time limit given for this as watch and wait is the preferred approach.

For adults at the moment there is usually a wait time of about 6 mths from referral to assessment but this fluctuates depending on staff levels and referral numbers. Increased funding would be needed to improve this wait time, especially if there was a target of 12 wks. (It should be monitored again NICE guidelines which are currently 3 mths). The CCG funds the diagnostic service – but no-one from the CCG was at the meeting.

After diagnosis, adults are offered a course of 6 post diagnostic sessions. This is open to adults whenever and wherever they received their diagnosis, but BASS asks people who haven't been diagnosed by their service to provide documents confirming the diagnosis. Those diagnosed are advised of the Care Assessment carried out by social workers. There has been some concern that some of the questions in this assessment need to be adapted to be more suitable for autistic people. No social worker was present to comment on this.

For children, SCIN (Social, Communication and Interaction Needs) are the principles developed to be used as a guide – including that services should be needs led, not diagnosis led.

3. Independent Living

Information for children on the Local Offer.

Website to be checked for information for adults (see above)

Understanding should be increased with the NAS Autism Friendly Award and Autism Hour (to take place in October)

The Market Position statement should include data on autism services

4. Employment

A 'hot house' meeting was taking place at the Council to discuss Employment for people with Learning Difficulties and/or Autism. Information on the outcome of this would be advised in due course. Led by Paul Gaunt, the Employment Lead at the Council.

The other points on the Action Plan will be discussed at the next meeting, as well as Actions raised at this meeting.

Any Other Business:

Helen will look at the circulation list to check if those who rarely or never attend still wish to be on the list. Some people had left roles and been replaced. Other key positions will be considered. It was agreed that the CCG should be represented at the meetings. Someone from Housing or Employment would only be asked to attend when this issue was specifically going to be discussed. The Terms of Reference would be reviewed.

Letters to the Mayor – Mike will speak to the Mayor to see how the concerns raised were being addressed and what progress was being made with this.

Actions Healthwatch needs to take (by whom? when by?)

Could Healthwatch help with encouraging GPs surgeries and hospitals to have better understanding of autism and the needs of autistic people, of whatever age, when accessing their services?

The CCG could be encouraged to increase funding for the adult diagnostic service so that NICE guidelines could be achieved. (This is relevant to all local authorities!).

Other information

Was the venue accessible? (Please circle) **YES** (City Hall)

Comments:

Did you receive all of the information you needed before the meeting? (Please circle)

YES

Comments:

Any other information/comments (e.g. was the meeting easy/hard to understand? Did you meet any key contacts?)

Efforts are made to make the meeting accessible for autistic adults. Use of cue cards to ask to speak/for clarification. Explanation of acronyms.

Date/Time/Venue of the next meeting: Thurs 2 Nov 2017, 12.30, City Hall

Are you planning to attend?

YES

Name: **Diana Elliott**

Signed: emailed

Date: 6th June 2016

Please return to ?Steffie Denton within 7-10 days after the meeting

and cc in ?Pat