



People Directorate Adult Commissioning

Bristol Autism Forum

Minutes

Meeting	Date	Location
Autism Forum	07.02.2019	City Hall, Bristol.
Attendees		
<p>Chair Councillor Mike Davies Zayne Patel (ZP) – Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group Dr Ian Ensum (IE) Bristol Autism Support Service (BASS) Matt Trerise (MT) - Bristol Autism Support Service Louise Kearney (LK) Social Worker JA – Person with lived experience JD – Person with lived experience SD – Person with lived experience Phoebe Kalungi (PK) – Children’s` commissioning manager - Bristol City Council Paul Housden (PH) Adults Commissioning Team -Bristol City Council Helen Pitches (HP) Commissioning Manager- Bristol City Council Pete Woodhouse (PW) Sustainable transport team – Bristol City Council</p>		
Apologies		CC

AGENDA

Item	Time	Agenda Item	Lead
1	13:00	Welcomes and introduction – how the meeting will work	Chair - Councillor Mike Davies
2	13:10	BASS service user reference group - feedback	Dr Ian Ensum - BASS
3	13:20	Discussion re City bus service	All Bristol City Council and First bus representative
4	13:50	Terms of Reference – updated for approval	Helen Pitches

5	14:00	Self - assessment – summary Forum Action plan	Helen Pitches/All
6	14:50	Minutes from the last meeting/matters arising	Chair
7	14.55	Any other business	Chair

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
1.	<p>Welcomes and introduction – how the meeting will work</p> <p>Introduction from Councillor Mike Davies (MD) asked all attendees to introduce themselves and opened the meeting – pointing out the use of laminated cards to help manage communication at the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>BASS service user reference group - feedback</p> <p>Dr Ian Ensum (IE) explained that there was no update since last meeting, keen to look at the plan today, they have not met since Terms of Reference meeting.</p>	

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3.	<p>Discussion re City bus service with Pete Woodhouse</p> <p>Peter Woodhouse (PW) explained that he was here to listen to what the group have to say, PW wanted to have a representative from First Group but they could not send anyone.</p> <p>PW explained he wanted to understand what it's like to use public transport, particularly buses, in Bristol for people with autism.</p> <p>Key thing is knowing where the responsibility lies, everything before the bus driver is the responsibility of Bristol City Council, such as the infrastructure, bus stop, how easy it is get on bus, information at the bus stop.</p> <p>JD expressed that he had been struggling using the current bus system, he has written to the Bristol City Council (BCC) about the way they manage the bus passes. JD said that the way they do it may not fit with current neurodiversity thinking. There are examples which JD has shared with officers of challenges that autistic people face when travelling using the buses in Bristol.</p> <p>SD told the meeting he had looked at the BCC Disabled Persons Application bus form in 2018, it was a 4 page document which he felt broke the Disability Act and ignored conditions including autism.</p> <p>SD shared this with Councillors who informed Council Officers and they updated it to a 2 page form which is now very clear, the medical information that can be sought from GP or other easily accessed places, it is really accessible. SD mentioned that It pulls in the information that the Council already holds and this has been well received.</p> <p>SD made the following observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual application process should be scrapped for a longer term card, 5-10 years. • Electronic timetables are often inaccurate or not working, the printed timetable is useful. • Some Drivers do not recognise disabilities which may not be immediately visible. There also could be language barriers, the card reader sometimes doesn't read and drivers have blamed the cards, driver training is an issue and there has been rudeness to people with disabilities from drivers. They also often do not check to see if there are assistants waiting to come on. 	
4.	<p>Discussion re City bus service continued</p> <p>Councillor Mike Davies (MD) asked for an explanation on how the bus passes work.</p> <p>Pete Woodhouse (PW) explained that the passes are administered by the Local Authority, the Bristol City Council passes are managed by South Glos Council but issued by BCC. PW was pleased it sounded like the process to get the form had improved and recognised that there is a key issue around passes validity time. ACTION PW will take away and discuss with the</p>	

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	<p>relevant manager, and will have to see what is dictated by central government.</p> <p>IE shared that it is hugely stressful for some people to have to apply yearly it, may be national scheme and there may be limits to what the Council can do, but IE urges the Council to push for 5 years or 10 years between applications, it would be one less worry. The card is for people with a form of autism that comes with conditions that prevent driving.</p> <p>Point raised that GP letters cost £15 a time and the process of filling it in every year can be difficult for people with multiple conditions it can be difficult. It was mentioned that for other disabilities there is a longer period.</p> <p>PW- BCC has little control over bus operators. PW has spoken to First about driver training, particularly around their dealing with people with disabilities. They have over 1000 drivers, First group approach since James Freeman took over has seen improvements; his view is to recruit people who like people rather than just drivers.</p> <p>PW will get details on the training courses.</p> <p>PW confirmed First has disability training, but couldn't be sure if autism particularly is covered.</p> <p>LK expressed that there is pressure on the driver due to the infrastructure in the City and the timetable they need to follow.</p> <p>PW told the room they have a timetable and will need to stick to that, congestion is an issue in the city; we are introducing more bus lanes to encourage less people to drive and to make the buses more efficient. First set their own timetables for the drivers.</p> <p>Paul Housden (PH) suggested that drivers complain that the bus timetable is unrealistic.</p> <p>PW explained that the duties drivers have are being consulted on, there is a process and First group meet with driver representatives to test if the targets are realistic.</p> <p>It is an issue, if the driver has an achievable timetable it creates a positive cycle, it's in the interest of First Group to make sure they have achievable targets.</p> <p>JD shared his experience that travelling can make him anxious, with many questions such as, will the bus be on time? Will the display be working? The experience of waiting for a bus, deciding which timetable to look at, the queuing to get on can be difficult, the people on the bus stop, is the fare different, the bus driver can all create stress. The whole experience can make me non-verbal, so asking on the forms if I can have a driving license is irrelevant, the skill to drive is different to the experience of using buses. It can bring a lot of stress. And can put me off using the bus.</p> <p>Autism is Autism, if you need a bus pass you need one.</p>	

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	<p>PW admitted there was a lot to take back and think about, the starting point is the bus pass.</p> <p>JD felt that autism is not understood well in the Council, with the contact he has had with BCC this is clear to him.</p> <p>PW confirmed there will be a discussion on what BCC can do to make the journey easier for people with autism, covering the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey planning is something the Council is responsible and improvements can be made. • The environment on the bus can be looked at, if you have a pass the driver shouldn't be questioning it. • The bus service is busy at times and rammed buses may not be helpful. <p>JD explained that the very need to communicate with the driver can be stressful. There are parts of the bus that rattles and shakes, the roads can make the bus make a noise, the indicator, the buzzer and beeping from the indicators can all lead to sensory overload.</p> <p>There was a further discussion about updates being shared with bus users such as if there will be delays. First group social media, Travel west App and the First app were all suggested as the best place to find information on journeys.</p>	
5.	<p>Terms of Reference – updated for approval</p> <p>Terms of Reference form was updated during a task force meeting.</p> <p>JD felt the term 'autism friendly' is an aspiration and that it wasn't clear what it really meant.</p> <p>The National Autism Society does not have clear guidelines on what makes somewhere Autism friendly.</p> <p>JA suggested we create a standard using the resources and different organisations involved with BCC.</p> <p>Agreed in room to use the term accessible over 'autism friendly' until it is clear what that means.</p>	

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	<p>Work plan</p> <p>The steering group pointed out there may be a problem with how many meetings there are and where the decisions are made. There may be a plan set but not enough support to keep the project on track before the review.</p> <p>The minutes go up on the website and give 4-6 months for people to read and look at actions between meetings.</p> <p>How to make form accessible</p> <p>Action- HP to send the Agenda and minutes separate, the minutes 2 weeks after the meeting.</p> <p>The writing should be 'plain English' and in as much as detail as possible.</p> <p>Action- the Terms of reference to be amended and an appendix to be added explaining how cards work.</p> <p>People are responsible for their own actions and can come to the Chair if they need to, but due to the high workload of the Chair, it is asked this be avoided if unnecessary.</p>	
6.	<p>Self - assessment – summary Forum Action plan</p> <p>Summary circulated with last minutes, the strategy was submitted to Public Health England, there were a few meetings and they looked at the self-assessment and developed the action plan. Each area of the national autism strategy was looked at and the plan has broken this down and it was discussed at a small sub group of the Forum.</p> <p>SD raised concerns around BCC and its partner organisations such as Care Direct and the NHS CCG around training. Care Direct are currently not training new members around Autism. In the NHS, the McGowan case is a good example, he died because his autism was ignored and treated with a drug that ended his life. It is in the press and parliament so feel comfortable discussing here</p> <p>1. Training</p> <p>Regular report to forum on what training is being delivered, so we can identify gaps. April of next year we will have 3 lots of reports to analyse.</p> <p>There was call to be realistic over what our reach is with training, there is only so much a forum can do, Southmead Hospital for example, are responsible for own training.</p>	

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	<p>2.2 Diagnosis. Discussion around a notice popping on to GPs desktop to give them guidelines of how to help if someone has Autism. A lot of work ongoing about identifying a children’s pathway, BCC are going to review what is going on with that.</p> <p>4.1 transitions BCC will publish a local offer, HP admitted the Council aren’t sure how easy that is to find at the moment on the webiste. There is work ongoing on young people’s accommodation needs. There is a target to improve the pathway between adult and children’s services.</p> <p>IE asked if there is a social work responsibility here.</p> <p>HP explained that the Preparing for Adulthood Team should cover the transition from child to adulthood.</p> <p>There was a concern raised that those people who aren’t known by children’s services need to be helped too.</p> <p>Zain Patel (ZP) expressed that a project plan with milestones, independent of individual people would be good for longer term actions, rather than just the annual action plan.</p> <p>HP shared that working groups outside of the Forum in the past were found to be not very productive. Having one plan that is clear, limited to set actions, with the overall goal of Bristol being an Autistic friendly city. It had previously been agreed the group wanted simple and clear goals tied to the National Strategy.</p> <p>Section 4 local planning and leadership. The national priorities may not match the local priorities so were removed from the plan.</p> <p>Section 6 HP asked if there are any specific areas of the council where we could look at and check how accessible they are to people with autism.</p> <p>JD felt that BCC HR relies on the autistic person to do the work, to request the reasonable adjustments and to educate their colleagues and boss. It can be difficult. When BCC recruit a manger and people to HR they should have a section in their employee specification to include communicating with people with Autism, this could be included in their review.</p> <p>Agreed to start communication with frontline services in BCC and use this plan.</p>	

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	<p>7.1 Discussion on an easier pathway for people who are homeless and autistic.</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Action- HP to talk to Paul Gaunt (BCC Project manager, Employment, Skills and learning) and ask him to report back on the training and what they do to help autistic people into work and training.</p> <p>Criminal justice services - HP shared that BCC have a duty to provide social care support in to prisons so we can monitor this.</p> <p>HP will also ask that autism is monitored in relation to hate crime.</p> <p>JD asked when an adult who is autistic is arrested or booked in are the people who are the responsible adults trained in autism.</p> <p>Brandon trust provide the appropriate, it is a fair assumption that they will be trained.</p>	
	<p>Minutes from the last meeting/matters arising</p> <p>None.</p>	
7.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>MD- update from HP around the website, met with SD and he gave advice on how to change the website section on autism to make it better, met with internal website person to reorder and make it look better to people with Autism. All the relevant minutes are up and live and the dates for the year are now advertised and we know that they will be in 2 weeks from meeting.</p> <p>LK The Entertainer (toy shop) have a quiet hour every Saturday morning, 9-10.</p> <p>SD There is a yearly film project called Different Voices, it is at the Watershed, it is running currently, they have been making up to 90 second films, there is going to be a free public screening on 15th march 7pm Arnolfini.</p>	