

Minutes of the Norfolk All Age Autism Partnership Board (NAPB)

Held on: Tuesday 29th July 2025 13:00 -15:00

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Please note: These notes represent an overview summary of this meeting rather than a verbatim transcript.

Members of the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board

Attendee	Role	Organisation	Attended	Apologises	No response
Adrian Grant	Co-Chair	NAP	✓	-	-
Andy Hudson	Head of Personalisation, Quality of Care for LD and Autism	ICB	-	✓	-
Caroline Williams		Healthwatch Norfolk	✓	-	-
Caron Ager	Learning Disabilities and Autism Programme Senior Manager	ICB	-	✓	-
Cathrine Hankin	Policy, Research and Equalities Officer	Norfolk Constabulary	-	✓	-
Catherine Haig	Clinical Lead	Autism Service Norfolk	-	-	✓
Claire Jones	Local Offer Manager	Norfolk County Council	-	-	✓
Holly Purchase	Autistic Person		-	-	✓
Joanna Smith	Consultant Clinical Psychologist/Clinical Lead (Autism Intensive Support)	Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust	✓	-	-
Joseph Jarvis	Autistic Person		✓	-	-
Joseph Royal	Neurodiversity Support Manager	HMP Norwich	✓	-	-
Julie Innes	Police Engagement	Norfolk Constabulary	-	-	✓
Karen Dures	Autism Strategic Business Lead	Norfolk County Council	✓	-	-
Lee Gibbons	Partnership Board Co-ordinator	NAP	✓	-	-
Lucy Adcock	Business Support	ASD Helping Hands	✓	-	-
Maria Karretti	Clinical and Care Speciality Advisor autism and LD	ICB	✓	-	-
Mark Knights	Parent/Carer	Family Voice Norfolk	✓	-	-
Richard Peat	Careers Adviser		-	-	✓
Sharon Brooks		Carers Voice	✓	-	-
Stephen Durrance	Autistic Person		✓	-	-



Susan Capps-Jenner	Autistic Person		-	✓	-
Tracey Walton	Autism Commissioning Manager	Norfolk County Council	✓	-	-
Trevor Key	Parent/Carer	NAP	✓	-	-
Viv Donaldson	Operational Service Lead LD CAMHS & NDD Services	NCHC	✓	-	-

Presenter	Organisation and Role	Agenda Item	Agenda Title
Gemma Hall	ASD Helping Hands	5	Young People Autism Advisory Group (YPAAG) Update

Guest	Organisation and Role
Chantelle Goslitski	Member of the NAPB Oversight group
Rhiannan	Assistant Psychologist

Action Log

Date Added	Action	Due by	Owner	Date Completed
	<p>TW to link Mental Health services with ABL Health to discuss the Ongoing Tracey Walton formulation aspect of the diagnosis</p> <p>Action Answer: A formulation assessment approach goes beyond diagnosis. It considers the whole person – their strengths, needs and challenges – to recommend tailored support and strategies. It focus is on improving wellbeing and independence along with providing a clinical autism diagnosis.</p>	Completed	Tracey Walton	29/07/2025
	For the Diagnosis Working group & the NAPB to discuss how they wish Diagnosis Working Group to have diagnostic data presented from the 1st June		Diagnosis Working Group	
	Finish first draft of TOR for both Diagnosis Working Group and Support Ongoing Lee Gibbons Pathways Working Group, bring back to Board for sign off	Ongoing	Lee Gibbons	
	Find a Group Lead for the Support Pathways Working Group	Ongoing	Lee Gibbons	
	To update the Norfolk Autism Partnership Structure Diagram and share to all members	Completed	Lee Gibbons	17/06/2025
	Schedule follow up for Autism Intensive support service	Ongoing	Lee Gibbons	

Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item	Pre-Meeting Support	Action and Due Date
	15 minutes was given to pre meeting support for those who required it.	
Agenda Item	Welcome, Introduction & Approval of minutes and action log	Action and Due Date
1.1	<p>Welcome and introductions made. Communication prompts posted to the Teams Chat window, and their use explained. No reasonable adjustments were requested. Members reported no declaration of interest.</p> <p>Minutes and action log approved by the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board (NAPB) Code of Conduct to be monitored by Lee Gibbons</p>	
1.2	Members were notified that an automatic transcript of the meeting would take place to ensure accuracy of minutes. There were no objections	
Agenda Item	Diagnostic Working Group Update	Action and Due Date
2.1	<p>AG provided a brief update on the status of the Diagnostics Working Group reporting process.</p> <p>Reports are prepared by the ICB for the diagnostic service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These reports are reviewed in detail by the Diagnostics Working Group. • A summary update is then provided to the board every two months. <p>Current status:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team is working out how future collaboration and reporting will function with the ICB. Expected that report content and detail will remain consistent with prior updates, including the monthly reports previously prepared by TW. 	
2.2	<p>Question: The service has been running for nearly two months. Have we had any initial feedback from service users, referrers, or ABL Health?</p> <p>Answer: There is no formal data yet, but early feedback from users and staff has been positive, with no current concerns to escalate.</p>	
2.3	<p>Question: At the recent forum, someone raised a concern that diagnoses from ABL Health might not be recognised by the NHS. Can we clarify that?</p> <p>Answer: Although ABL Health is not an NHS organisation, it is commissioned by the ICB under an NHS contract, so its diagnoses are recognised as NHS equivalent.</p>	

Agenda Item	Autism Support Pathways Working Group Update	Action and Due Date
3.1	<p>Group Aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve autism support in Norfolk. Make services easier to access and more autism-friendly. Co-produce helpful tools for autistic people and families. Maintain resources such as the Norfolk Autism Directory and Quick Reference Guides. Develop and promote the Norfolk Autism Partnership Kite Mark. 	
3.2	<p>As a Group, We Will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to autistic people and families about their experiences and use this to inform improvements. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage organisations to update their entries in the Norfolk Autism Directory and identify gaps in support. • Work with services to remove barriers and improve access. • Support local groups and charities to offer autism-friendly services. • Design the application process for the Norfolk Autism Partnership Kite Mark. 	
3.3	<p>Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-leads will meet monthly to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set the agenda for group activities. ○ Agree the progress update for the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board. ○ Co-chair the group and ensure inclusive participation from all members. • The group will meet once every two months 	
3.4	<p>Requests to the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of the group’s Terms of Reference. • Invitation to participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If interested in becoming a co-lead or group member, contact: adultautism@norfolk.gov.uk <p>Autism Support Pathway TOR Agreed pending addition of carers in section 3</p>	
3.5	<p>Question: On point 3 of the TOR, could feedback be collected from autistic people, families, <i>and</i> carers?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, carers can be included.</p>	
3.6	<p>Question: Can an autistic person be a co-lead?</p>	

	Answer: Yes.	
3.7	<p>Question: How will the group ensure it includes the right people to discuss autism pathways and gather lived experience?</p> <p>Answer: The group serves as a reference, but we'll also use questionnaires and wider conversations with autistic people to understand their needs and priorities across health and social care.</p>	

Agenda Item	Norfolk Autism Forum Update	Action and Due Date
4.1	<p>Autism Norfolk Forum – 1st July 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 26 registered; 16-18 attended • Next Forum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scheduled for Tuesday, 21st October 2025 <p>Update from Norfolk Autism Partnership Board (NAPB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Groups Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diagnosis Working Group ○ Autism Support Pathways Working Group ○ Young People's Autism Advisory Group (YPAAG) • Training Update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 sessions delivered since last forum with 23 participants ○ 6 further courses booked ○ Participant target exceeded: expected 60, actual 105 • Now That's What I Call Autism 2025 Update 	
4.2	<p>Guest Speakers</p> <p>Oliver Godfrey – ABL Health: Adult Diagnostic and Support Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New service delivering a minimum of 5 assessments per week. • Offices based in Thetford. • Funded by NHS; uncertainty if DWP will accept diagnosticians not employed by NHS. • Concerns about lack of post-diagnostic support and mental health services. 	



<p>4.3</p>	<p>Tracey Walton – Norfolk Autism Adult Support Service Co-production Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed with autistic people through surveys, focus groups, and naming consultations.• Toolkit and service framework shaped by lived experience. <p>Year One Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 309 referrals received.• 64% engaged in coaching; 36% did not engage for various reasons.• 44% of referrals achieved at least one coaching outcome.• Common outcomes: community access, managing finances, employment support.• Gaps identified in routines and life skills support. <p>Follow-On Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17% referred to adult social care.• Action plan to clarify referral pathways and ensure continuity of care.	
<p>4.4</p>	<p>Discussion: Reasonable Adjustments in GP Surgeries What’s Working Well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding, flexible staff.• Quiet or alternative waiting areas.• Multiple ways to book appointments.• Clear, direct communication during consultations. <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over-reliance on unsupported online booking.• Inflexible systems.• Discomfort requesting adjustments due to past negative experiences or unclear options. <p>Consensus: Adjustments often depend on individual staff attitudes rather than consistent, systemic practice.</p>	

Agenda Item	Young People Autism Advisory Group (YPAAG) Update	Action and Due Date
5.1	<p>Facilitator: Gemma Hall</p> <p>Group Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly established advisory group for autistic young people • First meeting held 25 July 2025; 6 attendees, 8 registered. • Meetings will focus on the NAPB strategy priorities; first session covered Priority 1: Improved Understanding and inclusion of Autism <p>Meeting Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions were simplified to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are your struggles? ○ What support would help? 	
5.2	<p>Key Feedback from Young People:</p> <p>In Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggle to process information quickly; not given time to think before responding. • Teachers often lack understanding of autism; students feel unheard. • Asking peers for help can lead to reprimands. • Need quiet spaces (e.g. before school) as canteens are too noisy. • Suggest one support class per week for autistic students with and without EHCPs. <p>Bullying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major concern, especially over special interests. 	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request for autism awareness education for all students, not just staff. <p>Uniform Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discomfort with standard uniforms (e.g. ties, seams).• Want sensory-friendly uniform options that still meet dress codes. <p>Timetables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Struggle with loud, crowded transitions between lessons.• Request to leave class a few minutes early to avoid overstimulation. <p>Accessing Healthcare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High anxiety around GP visits due to waiting rooms and uncertainty. Request:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Wait in car with a text-to-enter system○ Social stories outlining who they will see and what to expect in appointments. <p>Shopping Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queues and noise at tills are overwhelming. Request:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A quiet or "muted" till/queue for autistic or disabled shoppers	
<p>5.3</p>	<p>Next Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provisional date: Friday 21 November 2025• Focus: Priority 2: Improve access to education and support transitions into adulthood	

5.4	<p>Question: Have the young people tried shopping during quiet hours, do they find it helpful or prefer access at any time?</p> <p>Answer: Gemma has made a note and will ask this question at the next meeting</p>	
5.5	<p>Question: What will be done with this information from the young people?</p> <p>Answer: Their input will help shape the autism strategy action plan. Action owners will use it to guide priorities, and updates will show how their views are making a real impact.</p>	
5.6	<p>Question: Do the young people involved have EHCPs or support plans, and were their needs being met?</p> <p>Answer: Some have EHCPs or support plans, others don't. They all face similar struggles, showing that support isn't always in place or effective.</p>	

Agenda Item	Break	Action and Due Date
6.1	A ten-minute break was held	

Agenda Item	Strategy Oversight Working Group Update	Action and Due Date
7.1	<p>Update Following Last Board Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TW and KD wrote to action owners for progress updates to the end of May and next steps to end of July • AG, LG, KD, and TW Met to discuss Norfolk Autism Strategy Group membership and updated Terms of Reference, to be discussed in September meeting • Strategy Oversight Group met on 7 July to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review BRAG ratings and propose changes 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarify unclear wording ○ Identify actions needing escalation to the Board ○ Highlight well-progressed actions to share with the Board 	
7.2	<p>Year One Plan – Areas of Good Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk Autism Partnership Board’s Tier Two training is progressing well and expected to exceed targets • Change Grow Live providing Tier Two training to their staff successfully • Local Supported Employment service is on track to exceed government employment targets, with majority of supported people being autistic • Improved data clarity on Oliver McGowan training and monitoring progress 	
7.3	<p>Year One Plan – Areas of Concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of updates on improvement actions for children and young people’s health, especially diagnosis • Continued lack of updates on some school improvement actions, despite updates on Local Area Inclusion Plan actions 	
7.4	<p>Routes for Escalation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 1: A lack of updates on actions relating to improvement work for children and young people’s health, especially children’s diagnosis • Issue 2: Continued lack of updates on some actions relating to improvement work within schools. • Actions Taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NAPB Steering Group tasked to discuss and agree escalation routes ○ The Children’s Services senior manager for Education appointed and invited to meetings 	<p>Action: Escalation routes to go on the agenda for the next Steering Group</p>
7.5	<p>Creating the draft Year Two Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially planned to request Year Two actions from action owners during recent update • Review of strategic priorities revealed gaps needing reassignment of action owners 	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required more time to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review Year One progress and carry-over actions ○ Reassign organisations to fill gaps in priorities ○ Create new templates and personalised messages for organisations • Organisations asked to respond by Friday 25 July • Next steps after response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reword actions into plain English and have organisations review ○ Share Year One progress update and draft Year Two Plan for group discussion on 1 September ○ Submit draft Year Two Plan to NAPB for 30 September meeting ○ Seek approval through wider governance before publishing on NAPB 	
<p style="text-align: center;">7.6</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Write to action owners for progress updates for Year 1 and clarification of new actions for Year 2</p> <p>When: 1 August. Return by: 15 August, Who: TW and KD</p> <p>What: Action owners/organisations will be asked to provide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year One Plan progress updates to 31 July • Agreement on new Year Two actions and timeframes aligned with strategy priorities <p>Autism Strategy Oversight Group</p> <p>When: Monday 1 September 1pm to 3pm, Who: All members of this group</p> <p>What: Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress from action owner updates 	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-produce Year Two plan using feedback • Provide feedback on group's Terms of Reference <p>When: September to October, Who: Organisations' governance arrangements</p> <p>What: Agree their actions for the Year Two plan.</p> <p>Norfolk Autism Partnership Board</p> <p>When: Tuesday 30 September, Who: All members of the partnership board</p> <p>What: Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Year One Plan Progress Update and agree escalation routes • Review progress on Year Two Plan and agree next step • Approve Norfolk Autism Strategy Oversight Group's Terms of Reference 	
7.7	<p>Question: Are mental health updates and actions fully reflected in the plan, or is there a way to ensure any missing information is included?</p> <p>Answer: We welcome any mental health updates or actions for Year Two, and anything missed from Year One can be added to the 'You Said, We Did' section to make sure all progress is captured.</p>	

Agenda Item	Reasonable Adjustments in GP Practices	Action and Due Date
8.1	<p>Context & Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MK shared work with the <i>Norfolk Autism Partnership Board</i> on improving GP access for autistic individuals. <p>Issue Identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autistic children and adults face barriers accessing GP services. • Referenced <i>National Autistic Society's "The Constant Fight"</i> report (January 2025): 	



- 4 in 5 autistic adults struggle to visit GPs.
- Autistic people die 6 years earlier than the general population.

Survey Summary:

- Distributed to autistic people, families, and carers.
- Anonymous responses collected.

Key Results:

- **87%** felt they needed reasonable adjustments to access GP services.
- **53%** had **never requested** adjustments despite feeling they needed them.
- **Only 47% felt confident asking for adjustments.**

Examples of Requested Adjustments:

- Early or late appointments (quieter times).
- Quieter waiting area.
- Waiting in car and receiving a text when the appointment is ready.
- Face to face appointments

Insights & Implications:

- Strong demand for simple, achievable adjustments.
- Most adjustments are simple, low-cost, and easy to implement.
- Implementation could help reduce health inequalities.

Next Steps (Proposed):

- Present findings to Learning Disability Leads in every GP practice.
 - Note: No equivalent autism lead role currently exists.
- Encourage practices to adopt suggested reasonable adjustments.
- Develop and distribute social stories to support autistic individuals before GP visits.
 - May benefit broader patient groups as well.



8.2	<p>Question: When the respondents 'asked' for reasonable adjustments was this verbally, or in writing? Could a scaffolded letter/form/passport support communication?</p> <p>Answer: The survey didn't specify how adjustments were requested. Scaffolded letters could help. GP practices now have a coding system to flag reasonable adjustment needs in patient records</p>	
8.3	<p>Question: Should mental health practitioners working in GP surgeries—especially those linked to CMHTs—be included in this work around reasonable adjustments?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, mental health practitioners can often spot adjustment needs and if they know how to code this in patient records, that information becomes accessible to all staff.</p>	
8.4	<p>Question: Do we know if the people who asked for adjustments actually received them? Were some requests seen as too difficult by surgeries?</p> <p>Answer: Many who asked for reasonable adjustments received them. The adjustments were often small, simple tweaks.</p>	
8.5	<p>Question: Do GP surgeries sign-up to Disability Confident/ce, or is this accreditation specific to employers?</p> <p>Answer: I'm not aware of any GP practices being Disability Confident, though some are recognised as carer-friendly</p>	

Agenda Item	Any other business?	Action and Due Date
9.1	<p>Laura Edwards, an autistic member of the board, has sadly withdrawn from partnership board activities due to personal reasons, including her recent engagement and wedding plans. Laura expressed gratitude, saying the board has been part of her healing and growth, and she left on good terms.</p>	<p>Action: Lee Gibbons will begin recruiting new autistic members</p> <p>Action: Lee Gibbons to arrange a thank you message from the NAPB</p>

Agenda Item	Close of meeting	Action and Due Date
10.1	Co-Chairs thank all participants for coming and notified every one of the next meeting date.	

Future Meeting Dates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 30th September 2025 13:00-15:00 • Tuesday 25th November 2025 13:00 – 15:00

A Glossary of commonly used terms can now be found online at: www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/glossary/

Board Minutes Agreed on the: dd/mm/yyyy