

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR WORCESTERSHIRE AUTISM REFERENCE GROUP (A SUB-GROUP TO THE WORCESTERSHIRE AUTISM PARTNERSHIP BOARD)

Context

Worcestershire Autism Partnership Board are fully committed to engaging with autistic people in the working of the Autism Partnership Board and implementing the Herefordshire and Worcestershire All-Age Autism Strategy. We want to ensure that autistic people have opportunities to share their views and experiences but aware not everyone feels comfortable to do this at the Autism Partnership Board.

Purpose of the Autism Reference Group

The Autism Reference Group has been set up to give autistic people another mechanism to feed into the work of the Autism Partnership Board, this may be through attending the online or in-person meetings or feeding into the work via email.

Objectives

The group's objectives are to:

- Increase engagement and provide a vehicle for co-production with autistic people in Worcestershire
- Provide input and challenge as appropriate
- Identify any barriers in the system and support with new ways of working
- Inform and shape the strategy for autistic people in Worcestershire
- Inform and shape the action plan arising from the strategy which will work towards the development of services and support
- Escalate any issues/concerns with delivery of the strategy to the Autism Partnership Board
- Support the delivery of the local strategy, as an expert reference group
- Inform and shape action plans arising from the strategy
- Listen to and respect the lived experience of the autistic community living in Worcestershire
- Promote and affirm the strengths of autistic people

Membership

The Autism Reference Group welcomes autistic people (with a formal diagnosis or those who self-identify as autistic) who are over the age of 18 and who are a resident of Worcestershire to join Worcestershire Autism Reference Group in a voluntary capacity.

Autistic people who would like to join Worcestershire Autism Reference Group should email autismgroups@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Responsibilities of members

All members will support and accept the different communication styles of the neurodivergent participants.

Where information received as a member of the Group contains confidential information, members of the Group will respect confidentiality.

Members of the group respect the views and opinions of others and allow for full participation from all.

Members of the group will read the agenda and any papers in advance of the meeting and respect the Co-Chairs instructions/interventions to keep the meetings focussed on the planned agenda and schedule.

Meeting arrangements

The Group will meet four times a year (two online and two in-person) for an hour and a half.

The meeting will be co-chaired by a Lead Commissioner for Adult Social Care (or representative) and a paid person with lived experience.

An agenda and previous action notes will be circulated prior to each meeting.

Meetings will be recorded for note taking purposes only, then deleted, if the meetings occur on-line.

Action notes will be taken and shared with the group.

Declaration of conflicts of interests will be requested at the start of each meeting.

Accountability/Governance

The Autism Reference Group will report to the Worcestershire Autism Partnership Board. The Autism Partnership Board will escalate any issues to the Autism Strategy Oversight Group.