

Lewisham Autism Partnership Board

Terms of Reference

April 2023

Introduction

Lewisham All Age Autism Strategy 2023-2028 presents our vision for an autism-inclusive Lewisham and describes the priority areas we will work on over the next five years in order to move closer to this vision.

Our vision is that Lewisham is a borough in which autistic people can lead fulfilling lives. We will become an autism-inclusive borough, meaning the Lewisham will actively work with autistic residents to remove barriers to a high quality of life.

As the first of its kind in the borough, the strategy lays the groundwork for a whole-system partnership approach, which will be driven forward by the Lewisham Autism Partnership. The Lewisham Autism Partnership (LAP) is a collective of Lewisham professionals and residents who work together to deliver the Lewisham All Age Autism Strategy, in accordance with national guidance.

Lewisham's LAP Board is established as the main stakeholder delivery group that supports the achievement of our priority areas and direct the work of the broader LAP. The LAP Board will lead and direct efforts to improve the experience of our autistic residents, whether this be in their homes, services or the broader community.

The priorities of the strategy are below.

- Priority 1: Improving understanding and acceptance of autism within the community
- Priority 2: Improving autistic children's and young people's access to education
- Priority 3: Improving diagnostic pathways and autism support services
- Priority 4: Tackling health and care inequalities for autistic people
- Priority 5: Supporting autistic people into employment
- Priority 6: Reducing mental health admissions and supporting quality inpatient care
- Priority 7: Improving support within the criminal and youth justice systems
- Priority 8: Improving experiences of caring

1. Purpose

Lewisham Autism Partnership (LAP) Board will lead on the delivery of the Lewisham All Age Strategy 2023-2028 and related improvement efforts to achieve a better quality of life for autistic people across Lewisham.

The group will bring together professionals who deliver services and support to work in collaboration with the autistic community towards a common goal. It will be the responsibility of the LAPB to use the strategy to develop detailed action plans for each of the priority areas.

The LAPB will be responsible for ensuring there is a robust structure in place for measuring the impact on these actions.

The board is required to:

- Develop the actions plans that underpin the strategy
- Create and monitor working groups to deliver on these action plans
- Develop and maintain progress and performance monitoring systems
- Review local pathways and identify improvements in service configuration
- Inform the commissioning process in Lewisham
- Deliver the annual autism temperature check
- Ensure all key stakeholders are appropriately represented

Due to the number of priority areas within the strategy, the Board will focus on 4 priority areas at each meeting. A yearly forward plan will be put in place.

2. Meeting Administration

- The LAP Board will meet quarterly and relevant papers will be circulated a week prior to the meeting.
- Meeting dates and a forward plan will be agreed on an annual basis and will not be changed without the permission of the co-chair.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure all members can engage with the work of the LAP effectively.

All queries related to meeting administration should be sent to:

autismpartnership@lewisham.gov.uk

3. Committee Membership

The Board will be co-chaired by:

- Lived Experienced Independent co-chair: TBC
- Professionals co-chair: TBC

The Board membership will be made up of core members and those in attendance.

- Core members will attend each Board meeting and provide leadership and accountability for the implementation of the action plan.
- In attendance members will attend the Board as appropriate to its work and priority area.

Core Members will include representation from:

- Children and Young People's Commissioning Division
- Integrated Adults Commissioning Division
- Special Education
- SEND
- South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust CYP & Adults
- Lewisham and Greenwich Trust
- Public Health
- Children's Social Care (Children with Complex Needs)

- Adult Social Care
- Parent Forum Group
- DSR/CETRS

In attendance will include representation from, but not limited to:

- Youth Offending Service
- Community Safety
- Probation
- Jobs and Skills Programme
- Organisations and people
- Community Groups
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Metropolitan Police
- Safeguarding Childrens
- Safeguarding Adults
- Speaking Up

4. Roles & Responsibilities

The board will operate within the following code of conduct:

The code of conduct sets out the values and behaviours we expect to see from members.

This code aims to support fair and open coproduction throughout the life of the partnership.

- **Working as equals:** While we recognise members' personal areas of expertise and experience, we always work in partnership and on the basis no one member is more important than another.
- **Accessibility:** We want all members to be able to take part in the work of the partnership and have allocated resources to ensuring reasonable adjustments can be made. Members and administrators will work together to ensure meetings can be fully engaged in.
- **Cooperation:** Members commit to being proactive in identifying opportunities to work together and engaging in partnership opportunities where they arise. The vision and priorities of the group come before individual agendas/organisational campaigns.
- **Openness and Confidentiality:** While we seek to be as open and transparent about our work as possible, there will be times where it is important to

maintain confidentiality, or ensure anonymity of members. Members will work to establish these boundaries as and when required.

The board will operate within the following key principles:

- Nothing about us without us
- Neuro-affirmative approach
- Whole system collaboration
- Keeping you informed
- Closer to Home

The LAP Board is led by our Co-Chairs and coordinated by our LAP Coordinator. Their roles are summarised below.

Co-Chairs

The Lewisham Partnership Board is led by an Expert Co-Chair (a local autistic resident) and Practitioner Co-Chair (a local professional). The terms of office for our Co-Chairs is two years with the option for further year if agreed by the members.

It is the Co-Chairs' responsibility to:

- Develop a full and productive agenda
- Ensure the correct people are in attendance
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are implemented effectively
- Manage conflict between members, seeking mutually beneficial outcomes
- Ensure the Board keeps to time and follows the agenda
- Advertise and advocate for the work of the LAP Board

Role of the LAP Coordinator

The Integrated Commissioning Team will provide administrative support for LAP Board meetings and work with the Co-Chairs to:

- Ensure meetings are managed efficiently and the Board works productively
- All members have the relevant information they need to effectively engage
- Members are engaging with the LAP in line with the code of conduct

5. Quorum

The following members must attend for the Committee to be quorate:

- Autistic Resident/Carer
- Integrated Commissioning Team Representative
- South London and Maudsley Representative
- Adult Social Care Representative
- Children and Young People's Service Representative

6. Subgroups

The LAP Board is authorised to establish Working Groups under this terms of reference to develop and implement specific action plans and activities.

7. Reporting Arrangements

The LAP Board will provide a regular report of its meetings and progress against actions to Mayor and Cabinet on an annual basis.

8. Review

Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

9. Contact

Natalie Sutherland – AD Integrated Commissioning (Mental Health, Community Health and Autism). Natalie.Sutherland@selondonics.nhs.uk

Version Control

Version	Date	Action	Author
1.0	21/07/2022	Document drafted	PP
1.1	20/01/2023	Document tweaked	NS
1.2	04/04/2023	Document updated; code of conduct, membership	NS