



EASY-READ MINUTES

Friday 15 August 2025

The Library in Ellesmere Port

.....

The Learning Disability Partnership Board is people working together to make things better for people with learning disabilities.



What's Inside?

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People at the meeting

Name	Where From
Kevin Booth	Self-Advocate - Peoples Choice Group / Canal Street (supported by PA Chris Teare, MacIntyre Charity)
Anne Brown	CO-CHAIR - Self-Advocate - Healthy Living Centre
Jon Butler	Self-Advocate - Peoples Choice Group
Andrew Cooper	MP for Mid Cheshire
Jill Cooper	NHS - Reasonable Adjustments and Learning Disability Co-ordination
Sean Donelly	NHS Cheshire and Merseyside - Cheshire West Place - Learning Disability & Autism Project Manager
George Ebrell	Vivo - Minute Taker
Mark Flemming	Self-Advocate - Healthy Living Centre
Michael Gentle	Self-Advocate - People's Choice Group / Canal Street (supported by PA Simba)
Jackie Goldstraw	People's Choice Group and See Communications
Charlotte Halpin	Vivo-Support Worker Healthy Living Centre
Ben Harding	Self-Advocate - Healthy Living Centre
Gina Hulme	Self-Advocate - People's Choice Group / Vivo Care Choices
Alistair Jeffs	CHAIR - Vivo - Director
Dorothy Jump	Parent Carer
Jan Kolita	CWAC - Supported Employment and Travel Training
Councillor Sheila Little	CWAC - Councillor
Ali McAvoy	People's Choice Group and See Communications
Martin McGuinness	Self-Advocate - People's Choice Group (supported by PA Kayla)
Jo Moss	Parent Carer
Olayinka Oloyede	CWP Community Team Learning Disability Nurse
Gemma Robinson	Self Advocate - Peoples Choice Group / Canal Street (Teams)
Ruth Robinson	CWAC - Commissioning Manager
Kate Salvoni	CWAC - Senior Manager Prevention and Wellbeing
Emma Spencer	CWAC - Contracts Officer
Lex Stockton	Healthwatch Cheshire
Helen Walton	NHS Integrated Care Board
Micha Woodworth	Dial West Cheshire - Chief Officer



WELCOMES



Alistair and Anne welcomed everyone to the meeting. Anne stood in as **Co-Chair** for Jimmy from the Healthy Living Centre **Advocacy Group (HLC)**.

She read out his **Co-Chair Report**.



Jimmy goes to the **HLC** for 3 days a week.

He would like to go more in future.

It is important as it's a good way to get out of the house. Especially when house staff can't drive. It is a safe space where he has lots of friends.



Jimmy has lots of favourite activities like biking, disco and golf. The biking helps keep his legs strong. And another favourite is drama.

He was in the Cinders drama play. Next year they are performing **Sleeping Beauty**.

Jimmy is keeping his role a secret!



Jimmy is also a part of the **HLC Wishing Tree Foundation**. They will have raised nearly £5000 by the end of year. Service users can put their wishes on the tree. Everyone works together to make the wishes happen. Jimmy's wish is to go to Dublin around St Patricks day and visit the Guinness factory.



The next **HLC** fundraiser is the **Great Gatsby** party at the Civic hall on Monday 20th November.



Anne said her wish is for a spa day with a jacuzzi and afternoon tea.



Other Vivo sites are making their own **Wishing Trees**. Michael Gentle asked for Canal Street to have a **Wishing Tree**.

Alistair Jeffs said he will help set it up.

The **HLC** was at risk of closing.



The **Advocacy** Group fought for their building. They spoke to Councillor Sheila Little and **MP** Justin Madders. The **HLC** will now stay open.



Sub Group Update

REACHING OUR POTENTIAL

By Jan Kolita



Jan explained the **Supported Employment service**. It helps people with a **Learning Disability** or **Autism** to find work. They are supported in work for as long as they need. The team supports the **Employer** too so everyone can work well together.



Jo Moss reminded everyone about a **gap in Supported Employment Services**. There should be support for people who already work part time to find another part time job too. Or for people to find **voluntary work** instead of paid work.



Jan said they are **hoping** in the future to be able to do this.



! WE WANT Alistair to invite **Cheshire West Voluntary Action (CWVA)** to a meeting. To talk about supporting people to **Volunteer - ACTION 73**.



Jan explained the Independent Travel training service too. This means people can be trained to make a journey they want to do without support. Like going from home to college or a day centre. Training includes things like road safety and having another plan in place. People are trained until they are ready to travel on their own.



Bus drivers and Station staff need to know how to help people with learning disabilities and **Neurodivergent** people too. They need training.

Peoples Choice Group members will be training the Supported Employment Team in October.



Jan has shared a video showing people at work.
<https://youtu.be/FQfgCJvXR0M>

! Action 43 - now completed.

healthwatch

Update HEALTHWATCH By Lex Stockton



Lex talked about Healthwatch UK. She works for Healthwatch Cheshire. The local organisation listens to what people think. They pass feedback onto health and social care services. The **Integrated Care Board (ICB)** looks after both health and social care.

In the future, the NHS will close Healthwatch. For now Healthwatch are working as usual.

There will still be a service collecting feedback. But no details have been given yet.

Board Members were concerned about Healthwatch shutting down.





Andrew Cooper said **the NHS has to save money to give people better care**. Only 40% of patients are seen within 4 hours of going into Accident and Emergency. More money needs to be spent on treating patients. **Closing Healthwatch is part of the NHS new plan to save money.**



But it is still important to have a separate team to listen to people and pass feedback on. He will check for an update and pass onto Alistair.



Michael Gentle talked about how it is **hard to get a doctors appointment**.

Andrew Cooper said he has had the same problem. There is **still an 8 in the morning rush even though appointments are booked online**.



Alistair said we often talk about issues like these and annual health checks. Board members pass feedback on to help improve services.

! WE WANT Andrew Cooper to contact Wes Streeting about plans to close Healthwatch - Action 74



Sub Group Update
PEOPLES CHOICE GROUP
by Martin McGuinness, Ali McAvoy
and Jackie Goldstraw



The Peoples Choice Group shared their **report**.

Jon Butler talked about **volunteering and DJing at the singing group**. He was also recognised as being Elvis at the LD Conference!



We shared information about things like the Council's Local Plan **Consultation** and Easy Read Health and Cancer information. And an Easy Read leaflet made by Gemma about Flying with a hidden disability.



The Friendship Group made displays for Learning Disability Week, **Autistic Pride Day** and the **UN International Day of Friendship**. And talked about what makes good friendships.



Our drama group has been learning lots of Makaton to go with the songs in our play Winsford's Got Talent.



Northwich and Winsford Grub Clubs, Winsford Singing Group and Northwich Book Club are all going well. The Book Club started working on ideas for a **Sensory Story Bag**.



Chester Yarn Crafters have been making more pom poms! And will be working on a kindness project soon.



The Chester Cinema and **Review Club** and Singing Groups have been busy. And the Games Club got new members.



The Drumming and Sound group finished in May but will be back again in September.

The Working Group has -



- given feedback on the Government **Welfare Benefits** and Council Transport **Consultations**.
- worked on the easy read **Neurodiversity pathway** for children and young people.
- joined the Disability Positive **Safeguarding Board Reference Group**.
- finished recording sound for a **Mate Crime Video**. And gave feedback to the **Adult Safeguarding Board**.



Jackie visited the ex **Suso** group of friends in Macclesfield again. To talk about working together on training in the future.

The **ND Network Neurodivergent** Group has -



- shared experiences at the All Age Autism and **Neurodivergent** Partnership Board
- joined in Kaleidoscope Disability **Pride** Parade.
- had a Womens Group picnic at Marbury Park to celebrate **ND Pride Day**
- worked on **Sensory profiles**
- set the world to rights at our evening group
- shared tips and experiences at the Craft Group in Rods Secret Garden.



Jackie supported people with 1:1 sessions, including help with an emergency hospital visit, mental health support and helping people to get the right services.



We have had four cooking for health sessions with Lisa from All About Greens so far. We've started our campaign **Together We're Stronger**. Over the next 8 months we will share lots of easy read information about **Cancer** and how to look after ourselves and each other.



Issues we have come across -



- Funding is more difficult to find
- Lack of staffing and lack of drivers in Supported Living
- Parking for Plus Bus outside Storyhouse
- **PIP** changes and assessments are very worrying for people.
- Long waiting lists for **ND** assessments. And **GPs** not supporting people with the process.
- People living in shared homes that are not the right mix of people. And it would be better for some people to have their own front door.



Hope we have come across -

People that have had bad experiences talking about it to make things better for others in the future.



Sub Group Update **SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE HOMES** from Ruth Robinson



Ruth said there are 26 housing plans being built. Many of them are for people wanting their own front door. Lots of feedback has told them that is what more people want.

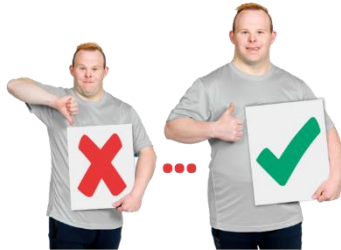


On 13 September the Housing team are meeting **Housing providers** to talk about what housing we need.



Jo Moss asked how people without a social worker will be put forward for housing.

Kate Salvoni said they have information of people who have some level of support. **The Review Team** keep building up information to help plan for support and homes now as well as in future.



Micha from Dial said it sounds like communication needs to be better. It helps people to know what is happening.

Dorothy Jump said more social workers are needed. To get Housing and Day Service reviews up to date.



Andrew said he knew someone who had a stroke waiting 4 years to get a suitable home. Bungalows are usually for people aged over 55. That makes it difficult for younger people who need one. And unless someone has been in a property for a year, no adaptations will be done.



He said housing providers should make ground floor flats with accessible adaptations as standard. Lots of new houses are being built. He asked are the team in contact with Council Planning Team. Ruth said they are being involved in conversations at early stages.



Micha said the Care Act 2014 said we should be Market Shaping. This means making sure developers build the houses that people need.

Sean Donnelly said Claire Walley will be at the meeting on 13 September. She will be able to give us an update.



! WE WANT Claire Walley to share a presentation on new housing development plans at the next meeting - ACTION 75.



Update **UPDATES AND IDEAS** from Andrew Cooper **MP**



Andrew said he used to work in social housing. He became an **MP** to make sure every child has the chance to reach their potential. As an **MP** he listens to people in Mid Cheshire. And goes to Parliament to make sure the Government considers our needs.



He chairs the **All Party Parliamentary Group** on Down syndrome. The Down Syndrome Act set out rights for people with Down Syndrome for things like health, employment and housing. And guidance for organisations to follow. They work to keep raising awareness.



Each **Integrated Care Board (ICB)** has to have a named Down Syndrome lead contact on their website. He has been working with the Down Syndrome Society to see how easy it is to find contacts.



He is also interested in **Special Education Needs (SEND)** system. He has 2 **Neurodivergent** children. He had to go through the appeals process to get their needs met. He thinks the current system for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) is not working for children, parents, schools or councils.



He said the Government is making a **SEND** White Paper in the Autumn. To set out what they think needs to change. He said he will come back and talk to us again.



! WE WANT To put the SEND White Paper on the Agenda to discuss when it is made. And for MP Andrew Cooper to come to talk to us again - ACTION 76.



Andrew said his third special interest is in **Welfare System Reform**. The Government published a **Pathways to Work Paper**.

Listing the changes we suggest to the **Welfare Benefits system**.



Disability Rights groups had been asking for some of the changes for a long time. Like the **Right to Try guarantee**. This would let disabled people try employment with no risk to their benefits.

And **extra money for Supported Employment services**. To support employees and support the employers.



And to **stop reviews** for people with long term conditions that do not change.



BUT some of the new changes were worrying. Like changes to who would be able to get **PIP (Personal Independence Payment)**. Andrew said he and others did a lot of speaking up about that. They got the agreement that any changes would be agreed and **Co-Produced** with Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) and careers and people with **lived experience**.

Some changes are needed because the current system is sometimes unfair.



Micha from Dial said she is bidding for funding to work with Disability Positive and the Peoples Choice Group. To help increase knowledge of the **Welfare Benefits System** and barriers and what might make the system better.



Jo Moss said the **PIP review** process is difficult. Social Workers doing **reviews** do not use language the same way as the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions). The DWP use the social workers **review** to see what the person is entitled to. But the **confusion over terms can cause mistakes**. For example "cook a simple meal". It is not made clear if this is just a ready meal or if it is something different.



Alistair agreed and said the Parent Carer Forum are also doing a good job raising these issues.

Kate Salvoni said she will raise this issue with social work teams.



Other items **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** from Alistair Jeffs



Sean gave the brilliant news that **there are NO patients with learning disabilities in Hospital Assessment and Treatment Units. And NONE in Long Stay Hospitals.**



We Said You Did

We wanted more people to be treated in their communities. Not kept away from their families and friends for a long time. Health and Care services have been working so hard on this. And this is the first time that the numbers update has been **NONE!**



Helen Walton gave another positive update about the **Virtual Tour** which is nearly ready.



We Said You Did

We asked for a **Virtual Tour** of areas in the Countess of Chester Hospital. It will soon be ready to present to the Board.



And Jill Cooper had one more positive update. At the end of September the Countess of Chester Hospital will have a **Patients With Additional Needs Strategy** in place.

They are putting lots of posters up to remind people to ask if they need a **Reasonable Adjustment**.



We Said You Did

One of our Partnership Board members Kevin shared a bad experience he had in hospital. His speaking up has led to the Posters being put up everywhere. So people know they can ask any member of hospital staff for help if they have additional needs.



Michael Gentle will be **Co-Chair** at the next meeting on 10 October.



NEXT MEETING INFO



Date

Friday 10 October 2025



Place

Ellesmere Port Library
Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0BG



Meet

10.00 till 10.30 - catch up time

10.30 till 12.30 - LDPB meeting



Meeting Feedback Time

12.30 till 1.00 in the afternoon



For more information ask **George Ebbrell**

Email: George.Ebbrell@vivocarechoices.co.uk



These easy read **minutes** were made by:
Ali McAvoy and Jackie Goldstraw from
See Communications. Penny Scott from
Canal Street Advocacy and Georgina Hulme
of **Peoples Choice Group**.