

**STRATEGIC VASP MEETING**

**Monday 9th March 2020 @ 10am – 12.30pm**

**Boardroom, Healthwatch Suffolk, 14 Hill View Business Park,**

**Claydon, Suffolk IP6 0AJ**

**MINUTES**

1. **Welcome and Introductions – Chair Gill Jones e-mail;** [**gill.jones@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk**](mailto:gill.jones@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk)

Gill invited everyone to introduce themselves, and to be sharing an indication of how they were feeling, of their wellbeing, as a score from 1 to 10.

**Present;**

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| --- | --- |
| Gill Jones - Strategic VASP Chair & Community Development Manager Healthwatch Suffolk | Terri-Ann Perkins – mental health and substance misuse manager, Suffolk Family Carers |
| Simon King - VASP Co-ordinator, Healthwatch Suffolk | Susan Balaam – Researcher, Healthwatch Suffolk |
| Richard Cox - Disability Employment Adviser Ipswich and Sudbury, DWP | Catherine Mather – Consensus Support, Service Manager for Home in Belstead, Ipswich |
| Hayley Charman – West Suffolk CCG | Karin Robinson - Amparo |
| Brenda Crichton – Healthwatch Suffolk | Linda Fravigar-Munday – leading a mindfulness group in Ipswich |
| Michelle Hutton – Early Intervention Team, NSFT | Sarah Lungley – Suffolk Libraries |
| Max Clark – Service User Governor NSFT | Nicky Willshere – Citizens Advice Ipswich |  |  |
| Eddie Cross – NSFT People Participation Lead East Suffolk | Margaret Tanner – NSFT People Participation Lead for children and young people, Suffolk & Norfolk |  |  |
| Aruna Sharma-Balls – Babergh and Mid-Suffolk DC Communities & co-chair Sudbury VASP | Jane Millar – Co-Chair Mental Health Focus Group, Healthwatch Suffolk |  |  |
| Suzanne Stevenson – Social Prescribing Manager, West Suffolk Council |  |

**Apologies;**

Sally Watson – Chair Sudbury Locality VASP & Public Health

Sophie Davies – Recovery College, NSFT

Claire Taylor-Haigh – Chair Waveney Locality VASP & Women Like Me CIC

Michael Mather – Chair Bury St. Edmunds and Forest Heath VASP & Julian Support

Andrew Good – NSFT Public Governor & Public Health

Gareth Moir – Chair Mid-Suffolk VASP

Melanie Pearson – West Suffolk Council

Gemma Levi – Commissioner, Public Health, SCC

Peter Devlin **–** Assistant Director for Mental Health and Learning Disabilities, SCC

Claudia Parrino – Chair Ipswich VASP & Public Health

Mandy Horne – Green Light Trust

1. **Notes from the 9th December 2019 Strategic VASP meeting**

Accepted

1. **An update about the expansion of West Suffolk LifeLink (Social Prescribing)**

**Suzanne Stevenson e-mail;** [**suzanne.stevenson@westsuffolk.gov.uk**](mailto:suzanne.stevenson@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

LifeLink commenced with a Pilot in Haverhill, as of January 2020 LifeLink has rolled out across all West Suffolk’s Primary Care Networks.

For people age 16 plus, with them 1 to 1, to help them identify what they need help with and to connect with opportunities in their local communities. Support could be helping with all kinds of things, for example; relating to working towards employment, learning skills, addressing health problems such as places to connect socially and/or to take more physical exercise. Helping to explore what would be useful and then help them along their way. Not intended to address/solve problems at the highest end of the needs scale.

The LifeLink Co-ordinators are mostly based in GP Surgeries but also have bases in other community locations. LifeLink is established in the following locations; Brandon LifeLink, Bury Rural LifeLink, Bury Town LifeLink, Haverhill LifeLink, Mildenhall LifeLink, Newmarket LifeLink, Sudbury Rural LifeLink and Sudbury Town LifeLink.

Looking how best to reach people who could be more isolated through living in rural communities. Developing drop in sessions in different places, such as Job centres.

Thus far, in the West the most take up of LifeLink has been by people age 30 to 60, with a fairly equal balance between male and female. Seeking to expand the diversity of the people accessing the service.

Details of the LifeLink service, including how to make a referral, can be found on their website: [www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/community/lifelink](http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/community/lifelink)

1. **Adult Safeguarding Process Review**

**Susan Balaam e-mail;** [**susan.balaam@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk**](mailto:susan.balaam@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk)

Healthwatch Suffolk are undertaking a review of the adult safeguarding process and are keen to engage with people who have any experience of engaging in any part of the adult safeguarding process since the 1st January 2019.

Equally wishing to hear from people who have had a positive experience as well as those who haven’t had a positive experience.

Would like to hear from people who have engaged with the process as members of the public and with those who have engaged as professionals.

Welcome engaging with people who have started to engage in the safeguarding process, however far into the process they progressed.

Shall willingly work with individuals in whatever way they feel most comfortable with. It will be confidential, and people can withdraw from sharing their experience at any time.

Aim is to provide feedback to the MASH – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, to help the system to understand what is working well and where improvements may be made. Attaching an explanatory document, please contact Susan Balaam to discuss.

1. **Sharing Citizen’s Advice experience of delivering Social Prescribing in Ipswich Nicky Willshere e-mail; manager@ipswichcab.org.uk**

Social Prescribing means different things to different people.

Ipswich Citizens Advice are drawing on the experience they have gained from engaging in some of Ipswich’s GP Surgeries over the past several years, to now provide for social prescribing for the diverse population in Ipswich.

Established on the basis that so many appointments are being offered, in a whole day or a half day per week, in thirteen GP Surgeries. Now seeing about 85 people per week, all referred from within the Surgeries. About to open to referrals from anyone.

People being referred usually are in one of three categories:

Level 3… The walking well… for example seeing their GP with low level anxiety and associated sleep loss.

Level 2… A lot going on, may involve relationships, debt, employment… struggling to see the wood for the trees.

Level 1… Severe mental health problems and/or Learning Difficulties, often will struggle to participate and need additional support just to engage in a conversation.

Start with what is that individual’s needs, then supported by Connect for Health Advisers, and when ready and able to take up opportunities in the community, by Community Connectors. Citizens Advice have specialist money advisers, and an energy specialist, who between them can help with debt management and benefits.

Benefits and tax credits are the biggest issue that people in Ipswich are seeking support with, this is often accompanied by other issues.

Nicky shared two case studies to help illustrate how people are being helped and shared some of their challenges.

Richard Cox shared that Work Coaches in the Ipswich DWP team have found that their clients have been helped through engaging with the Advisers and Community Connectors in Ipswich from Citizens Advice, positive feedback.

A question to Nicky was whether Citizens Advice are being adequately resourced to meet the need for support with managing money/debt, both in Ipswich and countywide, where local Citizens Advice advisers countywide are supporting people referred by local LifeLink Workers and Community Connectors. Nicky shared a brief overview of the challenges Citizens Advice teams are facing countywide regarding funding.

1. **VASP & Suffolk Mental Health Friends co-ordinator update**

**Simon King e-mail;** [**simon.king@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk**](mailto:simon.king@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk)

* The number of people participating in the VASP network has risen to over 1,000.
* The VASP’s presence on Twitter and Instagram continues to increase (both @oursuffolkvasp). The number of followers on social media has risen this from 2,600 at the beginning of 2019 (across Twitter and Instagram) to over 3,300.
* Seven Locality VASP meetings are taking place where people are welcome to come together and share news, to network. The Suffolk VASP is helping to support an initiative to launch a separate Gt. Yarmouth VASP.
* Regular VASP news round-up e-mail messages are being circulated, by the VASP Co-ordinator, usually once weekly, receiving positive feedback.
* Suffolk Mental Health Friends (SMHF) sessions are being shared countywide. Since being launched last year on the 10th Oct 2018 (World Mental Health Day) 28 sessions have been shared. A co-produced conversation about mental health shared with groups of people, countywide. The age range thus far has been 18 to 94. Please contact Simon for further details.
* The VASP shall follow the DoH guidance regarding people coming together in light of the Covid 19 virus.

1. **Sharing info from the Services represented around the table;**

**Michelle, Early Intervention Team Psychosis Assistant Practitioner…** making links and connecting with people.

**Brenda Crichton, Public Engagement Officer ICS, Healthwatch Suffolk…** The Integrated Care System (ICS), through Healthwatch Suffolk, are seeking to engage with people who have Diabetes Type 1, their experience of treatment and support, and with people who have Diabetes Type 2 about their journey. Wishing to hear, to gather information about, how people came to be diagnosed and how they are being supported.

* For West Suffolk… Brenda Crichton’s e-mail; brenda.crichton@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk
* For East Suffolk… Izzy Morath’s e-mail; isobel.morath@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk

They would like to connect with Diabetes support groups and with individuals. Please contact Brenda or Izzy to discuss.

The ICS, through Healthwatch Suffolk, are also seeking feedback from people about their recent (within the last year or so) experiences of cancer services, about people’s journey from diagnosis to treatment, and follow up support. Please, likewise, contact Brenda or Izzy to discuss.

**Jane Millar…** Co-production Partners, including the NSFT Trust as the principle provider, are sharing a willingness to share their feedback and work together. There is a proposal being considered for the Mental Health Transformation Programme, which is being co-produced, to next be looking to further engage in May and June.

**Terri-Ann Perkins, Suffolk Family Carers…** Mid-Suffolk VASP members had a very successful community engagement day in The Buttermarket, in Stowmarket, on Time to Talk Day in February.

Suffolk Family Carers have provided for some ‘Your Needs Met’ sessions for Carers, facilitated by Suffolk MIND.

There was a large turnout for the event about Borderline Personality Disorder in Ipswich, at the end of February, with about 120 people participating.

**Sarah Lungley**, **Suffolk Libraries…** Now offering five different reading lists of books, for people of different ages and needs, relating to mental health and wellbeing.

The 9th Open Space group is opening in Lowestoft Library on the 20th April, welcoming sessions, people can choose to drop in and out, a nice place to get to know other people, and also for people who want to be with others but at the same time to engage slowly, at whatever pace they feel comfortable.

Launched a new peri-natal service called ‘Me, Myself and Baby’. Working with partners including ‘Get Me Out of These Four Walls’ and NSFT. Various courses are being resourced, teamed with Suffolk MIND to manage referrals and to provide for the courses.

The SAGE’s website is now live, a partnership between Suffolk Libraries, Suffolk Family Carers and Suffolk MIND… [www.sagessuffolk.co.uk](http://www.sagessuffolk.co.uk)

**Richard Cox, DWP…** A really good event recently within Ipswich Museum, provided through working together in partnership, over 300 people attended.

Some Work Coaches are seeing people who aren’t going to see their GP with mental health related issues, they aren’t asking for and therefore aren’t getting the support that could benefit them. Work Coaches are seeing messages, people making journal entries, and hearing in person, people talking about self-harm and suicide, for which the DWP have a process which they follow.

Looking at how to make the Job Centres even more user friendly for people who have a learning disability or autism.

**Max Clark, NSFT Service User Governor…** NSFT are in the process of building a new website, they have a short questionnaire and are offering some workshops (in Norwich only), seeking to gather feedback from people to help with the design. Attaching a form that people can use to share their feedback with NSFT about the design for their new website.

A new committee has been created, including Governors (very welcome), to help manage new strategic developments such as acquisitions and mergers.

**Catherine Mather, Consensus Support, Belstead Villa…** The part of the organisation which cares for people with Learning Disabilities is going to become separate. Awaiting a CQC Report for the Home which Catherine manages. Making a video to help share messages about the Safeguarding Framework.

**Nicky Willshere, Ipswich Citizens Advice…** Suffolk County Council have declared funding for Citizens Advice for 2020/21, albeit whilst expressing an expectation that over the next three years the seven Citizens Advice Services in Suffolk should reduce to four Services.

**Linda Fravigar-Munday…** Facilitating a Mindfulness Group monthly, at Fore Street swimming baths, as a group practicing mindfulness together, rather than teaching people who have no experience.

**Karin Robinson, Amparo…** Raising Awareness about Amparo, offering support following a suicide in a range of ways. Shall gladly share a presentation to any organisation.

Please e-mail Karin for further information; karin.robinson@listening-ear.co.uk

**Eddie Cross, East Suffolk People Participation Lead (PPL), NSFT**

**Margaret Tanner, children and younger people’s (0-25) People Participation Lead (PPL)**

The Participation Strategy has been drafted, describing NSFT’s commitment to having participation throughout the organisation. Next having two Involvement Events (by invitation only from the PPL’s) one in Suffolk on the 19th March and one in Norfolk. Once ratified, the Participation Strategy will be the foundation for Local Care Groups to develop their ways of working.

Margaret, as the PPL for younger people, age range 0 to 25, is keen to engage with as many people and groups as possible.

Please contact Margaret to discuss, e-mail; margaret.tanner@nsft.nhs.uk

**Aruna Sharma-Balls, Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Council…** Working towards putting on the Armed Forces Covenant event, on the 25th June at the Hadleigh Guildhall. Looking to get as many GP Surgeries, and other organisations, to be Veteran friendly.

Shared that they are thinking about needs for support, for example by food banks, in light of the Covid 19 virus.

**Gill Jones…** Following up a concern raised in the Mid-Suffolk VASP about GP’s health and wellbeing, notably the suicide rate… Gill has contacted organisations to explore what support they presently provide for their front line healthcare staff, including Care UK with regards to support for 111 call handling staff, and the GP Federation.

For 111 call handling staff we understand they have…

* A health assurance contract
* Seated massage therapy sessions
* Re-launching a staff forum
* Mental Health First Aiders within staff teams
* Drop in sessions for staff to discuss anything concerning them

**The 2020 Strategic VASP meetings are taking place in Healthwatch Suffolk’s office in Claydon, IP6 0AJ, 10am to 12.30pm, on;**

**Monday 8th June**

**Monday 14th September**

**Monday 14th December**