

Valuing Neurodiversity in County Durham

Improving the help, advice and support available to our
neurodivergent children, young people, and their families

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Language and Terminology

- Neurodevelopmental
 - Relating to the nervous system
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD)
- Neurodiversity, Neurodivergent & Neurotypical
- [Further info](#)

Background and context

- Recent figures show over 4k children on waiting list for neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessment.
- The waiting time for diagnostic assessment is circa 48 months.
- Prevalence in adults is 1%. We're running at 2% of our under 18 population.
- National challenges with recruitment and retention.
- Expectation that something different follows diagnosis.
- Engagement identified that families find it difficult to navigate the system and find support.
- Families don't always receive accurate information and advice.
- The system isn't working.

Vision

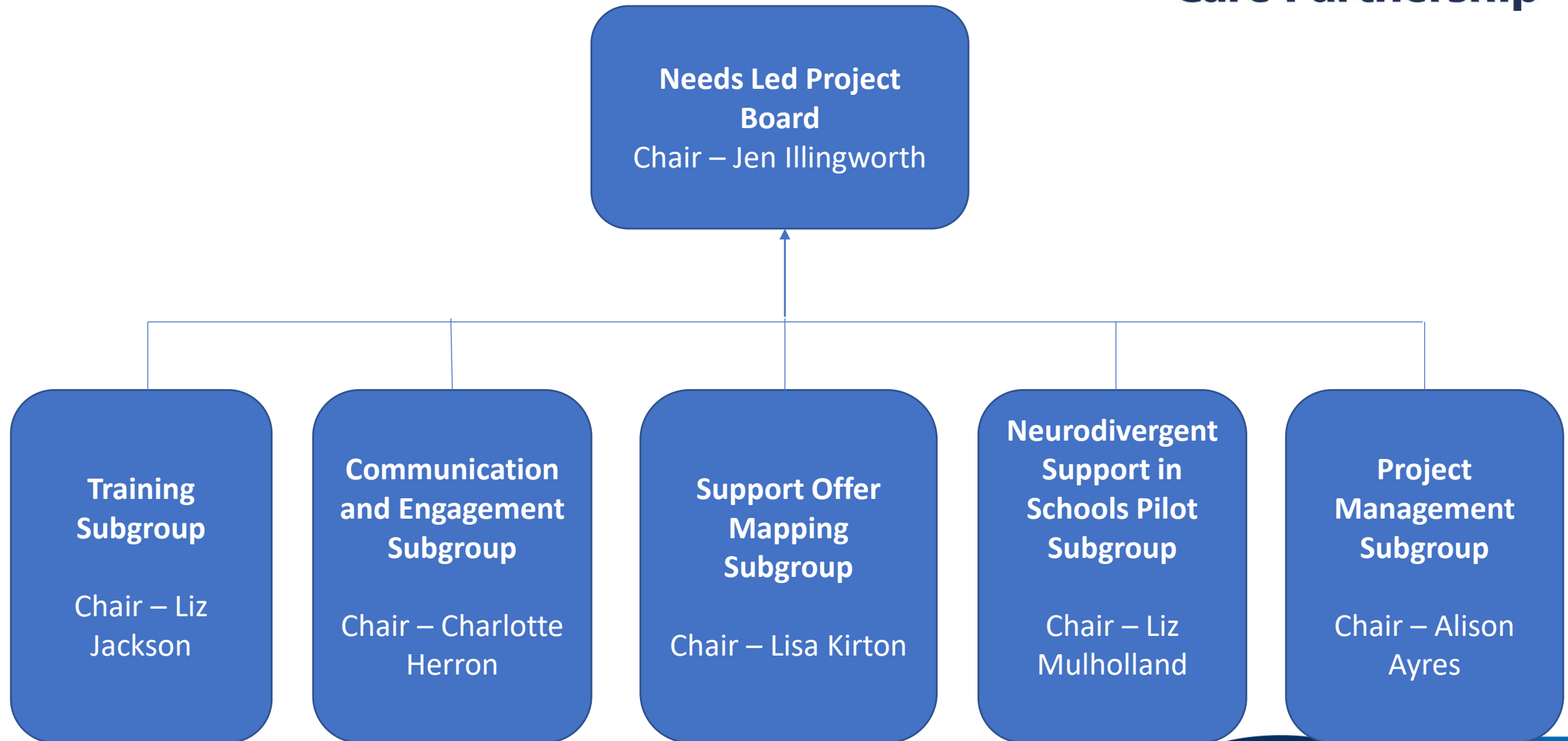
- Needs met at the point of identification
- Diagnosis as needed
 - Understanding of what diagnosis can add
- Ensuring advice, help and support is accessible, and that messages are consistent and appropriate regardless of the point of contact
- Confidence that the system can meet need
- Parents no longer feel they have to ‘fight’ or ‘battle’ to get help
- Ensuring a co-ordinated approach to training for all staff working with children who have neurodiverse needs.

How will we do this?

- Small system-wide group to consider what needs to be done.
- Presentation to Parent/carer forum
- Survey
- Paper drafted for Care Partnership Executive setting out current state, future options, and timescales (March 2023)
- System-wide buy in
- System-Wide Project Group with Director Chair & sub-groups

Governance

- This is a big piece of work, expected to take between 3 and 5 years to complete.
- We will regularly report our progress to the Starting Well Partnership Board, Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Partnership, Think Autism Steering Group and other relevant groups.



What are we currently doing?

- Training
 - Create a county-wide training offer, provided by a variety of partners, pulling together existing training and identifying gaps.
- Comms & Engagement
 - The co-production engine
- Support offer mapping
 - There is a lot available. This group are mapping it across the County and will co-produce the gaps and solutions.
- Support in schools pilot
 - Improving the quality of the first conversation families have with the system

Questions?