

Moray Autism Board – Citizen Leadership Update

From the priorities identified in the Moray Autism Strategy, Moray Council was awarded funding from the Scottish Government to increase awareness and understanding of autism and to develop citizen leadership. There are several strands to this work stream:

Tier 1 – General awareness raising. **Leisa will cover**

Tier 2 – Intensive training for people who have autism to become citizen leaders, empowering them to develop and deliver training throughout Moray, with the potential of moving on to becoming a self-sustaining social enterprise as a training organisation.

We worked with the SWTT and went out raising awareness of citizen leadership across Moray. From these sessions, we attracted volunteers to become citizen leaders and trainers for autism in Moray.

In July 2012, people with autism were recruited to take part in extensive citizen leadership training to enable them to become trainers in Moray. The training highlighted 8 principals:

1. everyone has potential
2. need help fulfil opportunities for development
3. need to involve people at the earliest opportunities
4. individuals are helped to show leadership in a way that suits them
5. people are given information that is clear and in plenty of time
6. people use their leadership skills to challenge inequality in services and wider society
7. people to have more control over their own services, through working in partnership with services.
8. Citizen Leadership is for the benefit of other people who use services as well as yourself.

The citizen leader training also provided the participants with skills and tools which help them to become trainers and be able to present their work.

We now have a group of 4 autism citizen leaders in Moray and apart from the autism training programme which Leisa will talk about; they have also been involved in:

- Consultation about a 1 stop shop for autism in Moray
- Launching the NAS autism awareness card and David appeared on TV last week
- Attended different autism awareness sessions x2 in Inverness
- Will investigate and learn about the 1 stop shop for Grampian and also visit the Number 6 – one stop shop in Edinburgh so that they can be more informed about what could work here in Moray.

Tier 3 – It is hoped the citizen leaders may also get involved in service development, particularly the development and running of a one-stop shop for adults with high-functioning autism and Aspergers Syndrome, offering support face-to-face and through the development of a range of social media. This was identified by service users as a need during the consultation for the strategy.

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