

Cross Party Group on Dementia

AGM

Wednesday 9 December

Meeting start time: 13:00

Present: Sue Northrop (Dementia Friendly East Lothian), Katla Helgason (National Dementia Carers Action Network), Jim Pearson (Alzheimer Scotland), Anna Buchanan (Life Changes Trust), Ashleigh de Verteuil (The Health and Social Care Alliance), Lucy Richards (StudioLR), Fiona McLeod MSP, Mary Scanlon MSP, Roderick Campbell MSP, Chris Land (MSP assistant to Mary Scanlon), Paul Gillen (in house secretariat).

Roderick Campbell MSP (RC) welcomed attendees, and introduced Anna Buchanan, who gave a presentation about the work of the Life Changes Trust (LCT).

Presentation from Anna Buchanan (AB)

AB began by stating that LCT was set up with the help of Big Lottery funding, with the aim of transformational and sustainable change for people affected by dementia and care experienced young people. In 2014-15, nearly £6m was invested in more than 40 dementia initiatives. AB further stated that families affected by dementia were also a focus of LCT. The Dementia Friendly Programme is one of the flagship programmes of LCT.

AB stated that investment is based on what people with dementia want the money to be spent on. The Trust has, according to AB, invested in order to create impetus. LCT has a website, which reports findings of what happens when people are financially empowered.

In terms of keeping track of what LCT does, email and post let people know what is going on, as well as the LCT website. Quarterly reports can be downloaded via the website. LCT also makes use of Twitter, and holds a number of events.

AB then discussed the role of community, and highlighted its importance. AB drew the CPG's attention to current initiatives that focus on making places about community. For example, LCT has put funding into a Gaelic speaking project on the Isle of Lewis. People have, according to AB, reverted back to Gaelic as a result of their dementia.

Another LCT project is its dementia friendly garden. The idea has been for the garden to become a gathering place where people can become connected and engaged. AB also talked about the paths for all project, which aims to make walking a dementia friendly exercise.

At this point, Jim Pearson (JP) talked about Alzheimer Scotland's Motherwell project, which gives businesses hints and tips on how to become more dementia friendly. JP also discussed the dementia friends initiative, which helps people to find out more about dementia. There are, according to JP, approximately 12000 dementia friends in Scotland.

AB then discussed a pilot project in Argyle and Bute, and in Edinburgh. AB explained that people were given £500 to spend on whatever they would like. Examples of what people bought are washing machines, and breaks for carers. In all, there were 448 awards. The project produced 92% feedback. AB explained that when people had financial control over the gift, the vast majority made the most of it. AB mentioned that there are pockets of dementia poverty in Scotland. A similar project will come later, according to AB.

Finally, AB discussed the importance of exercise in keeping dementia at bay, and giving a voice to those with dementia. AB also referred to the Community and Dementia Conference, 21 September 2016, at the Perth Concert Hall.

Office Bearers were then elected. Roderick Campbell and Mary Scanlon were elected as Convenor and Co-convenor, respectively.

Elections of officers bearers was followed by a Q&A with AB.

The meeting was then brought to a close, and finished at approximately 14:00.

