

## **Grampian Autistic Society**

### **Annual General Meeting**

*Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015*

#### Chairman's Report

We currently have an active Board comprising 10 members, of whom 6 are parents of people with ASD, and 4 are appointed directors. All directors give generously of their time, knowledge and expertise to participate in both Board and sub-committee matters, bringing to bear specialist skills including finance, legal, human resources and general business management. Since our previous AGM in November 2014, 6 ordinary Board meetings have taken place and have been well attended.

Our sub-committees dealing with Staff & Services, Finance & Governance, Fundraising & External Communications and Employment Support have continued to meet between Board meetings to provide specific input to these areas as required.

Some highlights:

#### Staff and Services

- We were happy to welcome our new Children's Services Coordinator, Shona Hepburn in April.
- Keeping up with staff turnover has remained an ongoing effort requiring almost continuous recruitment. A Staffing Task Force has been set up, and has met in September and October to put additional focus on this area.
- We have agreed specific goals around reducing the waiting lists for existing services.
- The unit at 37 Carnie Drive was put into use in the first half of this year.
- The contracts for services in Stonehaven and Banchory come to an end in a few months. We have submitted tenders to continue these services and expect to know the results within the next month.
- We are supporting a client to get back into school after exclusion, and considering whether there may be scope to develop a new service in this area.
- The implementation of pension provision for staff began in October 2015.

#### Finance and Governance

- A high level Strategy review was carried out in September, with no major changes made to current strategy.
- An update to the Directors' Induction Pack was completed.
- We have given attention throughout the year to identifying, reviewing and mitigating key risks in the finance and governance areas. This is an on-going responsibility.
- Some of our cash reserves were deployed in refurbishment of 37 Carnie Drive, and it is intended to have work done to freshen up the appearance of the other units.
- Cash flow is being carefully monitored due to delayed invoice payment as a result of ongoing discussions with ACC about agreed rates for services.

### Funding and External Communications

- We have been reviewing Strategy and have proposed a change of focus to increase our marketing efforts, particularly in regard to staff recruitment.
- The second year of our 3-year funding from Aberdeen Harbour Board Community Action Fund was received.
- A successful Valentine's afternoon tea fundraiser was held in February.
- Children's activity days were held in the October holidays for awareness-raising.
- We are making increasing use of Facebook as a communication vehicle.

### Employment Support

- Our developing Employment Support Service was taken over by Craig Henderson in early 2015.
- 17 clients in total have so far been identified, and good progress has been made with many of them.
- Partnering with Job Centre Plus and Skills Development Scotland has been helpful in developing this service.
- The service parameters were expanded to ensure we can help individuals to maintain employment as well as to gain employment.
- We are also offering support to employers who have any staff members having an ASC.

### General

More details on the services and the training provided will be provided by the Leadership Team in their reports. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our staff and Leadership Team for all they have done in the last year to further the aims of the Society. I would also like to record my personal appreciation of the commitment and leadership shown by our General Manager.