



Launch of the Inverness Leadership Community Briefing Paper

1. So what will actually happen on 21st September??

Come with a spirit of Generosity.....

So often we go to events like these thinking “what am I going to get out of it?” And yes, we are all busy people and we have to be sure that it is worth us investing our time in these activities. However, I would urge you to also come to this day with a “spirit of generosity” by thinking through beforehand:

“what is it that I think, know, believe and hope for, that I can share with this community?”

Because if everyone comes along willing to give something, then we will all get so much more out of the day. So take a bit of time and think about what you might talk about during the small group work and the lunch/ coffee breaks – it might be:

- Your experiences of good leadership in social services, and the not so good.
- Your feelings about your own leadership.
- What support do you need to be the leader you want to be?
- What's worked well in some of your projects, as well as your lessons learned on what doesn't (to stop folk going down the rabbit holes you've already been in!!)
- What are the real issues and challenges that you are dealing with and you are willing to take a risk and talk about these with your peers in a confidential space?

And take a risk.....

..... and say what you really think! Everything that is said within the Leadership Community is absolutely confidential. So do challenge current practice and current thinking, do give constructive criticism and do say “wouldn't it be great if.....”

The draft programme is:

Time	Activity
1030	Registration, Refreshments and networking
1100	Welcome, Ice Breaker Exercise, Background & Objectives of the Leadership Communities Project; Linda Anne Smith, Leadership Communities Project manager
1130	Some personal Leadership stories & views from a local person working in social services.
1135	Small Group Conversations Session 1 People will choose to participate in one of the following facilitated conversations from, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Leading Change often requires having difficult conversations – what works?- How can partnerships become effective Leadership Teams?



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What leadership is need in an economic downturn? - What are the different Leadership styles? - Personalisation; self-directed care? – which models of service user involvement actually work, and how?
1240	Lunch & Networking
1345	Small Group Conversations Session 2 People choose another conversation from the choice above.
1445	Getting involved in future activities..... Linda Anne Smith
1500	Close

2. Some Background on the Leadership Communities Project

Leadership communities are open to **anyone from any sector, organisation and level** of the social services workforce.

Their roots lie in the Leading to Deliver programme, and a need to do something to support the sustainability of participants applying and sharing what they had learned about leadership after their time on the programme had ended. In March 2007 we got together 100 of the Leading to Deliver graduates and they came up with the idea of setting up a network of local leadership communities across Scotland where anyone from the social services workforce could be involved as long as they held to the following guiding principles:

- Leadership is about your attitude, not your job title.
- You are a leader if you have the courage to challenge current practice and thinking so that services better meet the needs of the service user.
- You come to the community with a spirit of generosity – if everyone puts something in, then everyone will get something out of it.
- The community will be a comfortable, safe environment where people feel able and encouraged to share their real experiences and ideas.
- The community is a practical resource – of ideas, of what works and what doesn't, of contacts - for all its members. It is not just a talking shop.

In November 07 the South East Leadership Forum was launched, open to everyone working in social services in the Lothians and Borders areas. In September 08 the West of Scotland Leadership Community was launched, and in April 2009 the Tayforth community got up and running.

What's the purpose of having a Leadership Community?



To bring together and support a community of connected, open-minded and motivated leaders who share ideas, knowledge and experiences, and who seek to be the best they can be at delivering social services in a way that meets the needs of service users.

Who can be involved?

Each local leadership community is a respected collective of people at **every and any level of the organisation – public, private and voluntary sector** - who will challenge current policy and practice in order to achieve better, more user-orientated services. We find that when you get this real mix of people and experiences together, it often results in some very rich, powerful and new conversations.

Objectives

- To promote and develop a non-silo climate of effective, innovative, responsive and dynamic leadership in Scotland's Social Services.
- To sustain and build on the leadership capacity and capability in the sector.
- To scope the future, create the vision and influencing the development of tools needed to realise this vision.
- To ensure that the community remains sustainable and relevant.

Links with Local Learning Networks and Local Practitioner Fora

The Leadership Communities will work with existing structures and projects where possible and appropriate. In particular there will be strong linkages with both the local Learning Networks and the Local Practitioner Fora. The leadership communities will reinforce the work of the learning networks and practitioner fora, not compete with it. Ongoing operational and strategic discussions will ensure this.

3. Some Leadership Community Projects

The existing projects in the other 3 regional communities are now also open to anyone in the North e.g.

3.1 CO-CONSULTANCY PROJECT

What do we mean by Co-consultancy?

- An exchange of learning, information and experience – in essence a kind of “free” consultancy from your peers in the social services workforce in Scotland.
- Co-consultancy involves Giving and Taking – trading skills and experiences.....
 - Giving - what have you/ your team/ your organisation gained a lot of learning from – both good and not so good experiences.
 - Taking – what are you/ your team/ your organisation working on that could benefit from learning from others who have been through something similar.

What will it cost?

Nothing but your time – and remember, however much you put in, you and your organisation can “draw down” the equivalent time from others. For the pilot project we are asking that you put in up to ½ day per month for a year i.e. 6 days in total. And remember that this entitles you, your team/ your organisation for 6 days “free resource/ consultancy” from the “bank” of skills and experiences available



from the other social services workers and organisations involved in the pilot. This will be from a wide range of large and small, public and voluntary organisations across Scotland.

How will it work?

You just get in touch with me and I'll send you a very simple template with some trigger questions - it takes 5 minutes to fill in, honest!! - that will allow me to summarise what you are offering and what you need in terms of skills and experiences e.g.

I can offer.....	I need help with.....
Experience re addictions including motivational interviewing	Finding the right mentor
Facilitation of development days	Supporting partnerships between users, carers and professionals
Prince 2 – helping people struggle with it	Risk Management

I will then work with you to “match “your offers and needs with those in the rest of the group. As part of the pilot project, I will be exploring the most effective methods of brokering these “matches”. I will also be looking at how best to handle the issues of confidentiality and quality control. This project is also facilitated online as one of the tools on the emerging Leadership Framework – see below.

Want to get involved?

Drop me an email linda@smithsquared.co.uk or speak to me at the 21 September event.

3.2 ACTION LEARNING

Each “set” will comprise 6 people who work in social services in any sector and at any level, and is facilitated by an independent facilitator. They meet for 2 hours each month and set members bring their live issues and challenges to the group, and with the help of the facilitator, the group digs deeper into what the real issues are and identifies possible actions.

If you are interested in joining a local set, just send me an email to Jan Bethune who is organising these sets jan@positivepeopledevelopment.com or speak to Jan at the 21 September event.

3.3 RISKY BUSINESS – LUNCHTIME WORKSHOPS

Everyone in social services is in a “risky business” – it’s an integral part of our daily working practice. However many of us go to great lengths to avoid risks, keeping our heads down, delivering good services, but taking a narrow-ish and conservative approach, fearing failure, and often paralysing our ability to support the huge potential for service improvement.

Now some of us believe that through taking intelligent and calculated risks, we can grow, learn and achieve our dreams, goals and ambitions. By taking well thought out chances, we can make a difference in not only our own lives, but also in the lives of others.



If you are in this second group, then come along to the "Risky Business" workshops where you can work with a small group of like-minded individuals to develop creative, collaborative plans and actions, using existing resources, that reflect the stated priorities of service users.

In these days of funding drought, we need leadership in social services that is innovative, takes positive risks and works jointly with (often some surprising) partners. These monthly lunchtime sessions will not take you away from work for too long, and connect you with interesting individuals and will give you a safe place to think, to challenge current practice and thinking and to play with some new ideas.

The first workshop in Edinburgh in a few weeks is looking at services for older people, with future sessions planned for citizen leadership and mental health services. If you want to get something similar up and running in Inverness, drop me an email linda@smithsquared.co.uk or speak to me at the 21 September event.

3.4 LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK – TESTING THE PROTOTYPE

One of the milestones of the Changing Lives Implementation Plan is the development of a Leadership Framework for Social Services. We have developed this idea further and believe that what is needed is a dynamic powerful resource - not a document - that will provide you with some very practical tools and ideas, and stand the test of time. It will introduce you to new ways of thinking which are complementary or additional to existing local leadership development activity and inspection and audit processes. It is not a list of competences, or an academic model.

We are currently developing a prototype of what this Framework could look like and we need you to help us test it before we take it out to the wider social services workforce next year. This prototype can be accessed via **Social Services Knowledge Scotland (SSKS)**, a new web-based service for practicing social services staff where you can access, information and learning resources, social networking tools where you can share resources and dialogue as well as a range of tools to help you develop skills so that you can find the information you need when you need it. To get to the prototype framework go to SSKS at www.sks.org.uk, then go to the Topics section, select Leadership and have a look round and play!!

4. Tell your friends.....

This is not an exclusive club! Anyone working in social services with the right attitude can be part of this. So if you want to pass on this invitation to any colleagues, please do and ask them to get in touch with me. I'll be in touch soon with more news. Looking forward to working with you,

Linda Anne Smith
Leadership Communities Project Manager
17th August 2009