

Access to Public Appointments Board Shadowing Pilot Project

Mid-Phase Report – January 2020

Project Partners

**Inclusion Scotland
Public Appointments Team, Scottish Government
Ethical Standards Commissioner**



**Inclusion
Scotland**



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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**Ethical Standards
Commissioner**

Project Description

At present disabled people are significantly under-represented in applications and appointments to regulated public body Boards in Scotland¹. We believe that public bodies are missing a potential pool of talent and experience because of this under-representation. In seeking to reduce the barriers that disabled people face, we are piloting a Scottish Government funded shadowing placement scheme. This will be over the period of a year allowing six disabled people the opportunity to shadow six regulated public body Boards.

Project Outcomes

1. At least five disabled people will have shadowed a public body Board with mentorship from a specific Board member.
2. At least five disabled people will have increased their capacity to apply for a public appointment through experiential and practical training.
3. At least five Boards will have received disability equality training and be able to demonstrate that they have built capacity and learning to be more inclusive.
4. A proportion of the Boards and participants will be located in rural and remote areas.
5. An evaluation report will be produced providing recommendations based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected.
6. To support public body Boards to achieve aspects of the expectations on them in the Scottish Government's guidance on succession planning

¹ In 2018, 9.4% of applications received were from those with a declared disability. 6.9 % of current appointees are disabled (page 18 of ESC report)
<https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/FINAL%20ESC%20Annual%20Report%20on%20Public%20Appointments%202018-19.pdf>

in being more diverse and representative of the wider Scottish population.

Commitment from Boards

- Agree to have a disabled person shadow their Board for a period of up to a year.
- Appoint a mentor from the membership of the Board for the shadow.
- Relationship between Board and the shadow participant will be person-centred, with a focus on removing potential barriers to participants' involvement in Board activities as well as gaining learning on accessibility and inclusiveness going forward.
- Provide ongoing feedback on the progress of the placement.

Commitment from Shadows

- Agree to shadow a public body Board for a year.
- Agree to attend three peer networking/training/monitoring and evaluation meetings within the year.
- Provide monitoring and evaluation feedback throughout the year.
- Be willing to act as an ambassador for Public Appointments after their year on the scheme is completed.

Project Delivery

In April 2019 a letter from the Minister for Older People and Equalities, Christina McKelvie MSP, was sent to a pre-selected range of public body Boards. Boards were identified that would have a reasonable amount of interaction with disabled service users, and existed in a geographical spread across Scotland. In April 2019 Inclusion Scotland advertised Board shadowing positions through its members and networks, ensuring that we reached disabled people across Scotland.

Six Boards signed up:

- Independent Living Fund Scotland – Livingston
- National Waiting Times Centre – Clydebank
- Ayrshire and Arran Health Board – Ayr
- NHS 24 – Edinburgh and Glasgow
- Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority – Balloch
- Scottish Natural Heritage – Inverness

At the end of May 2019, twelve applicants (from a total of seventeen) were invited to attend an introduction workshop and informal interview. From this, six were selected to participate in the scheme, and were matched with a Board.

In June 2019 the shadows and their Board mentors attended an induction workshop, where they had the opportunity to meet each other for the first time. The workshop was framed around:

- A brief introduction to the project;
- Being a Board member – the skills, and expectations required of Board members;
- Getting the most from this shadowing scheme and identifying opportunities;
- Developing a learning plan.

Each shadow and mentor met independently before attending their first board meeting. Due to the Boards involved having different meeting schedules, shadows started at different points between July and September 2019.

At the end of November 2019 the shadows and Board mentors attended a second workshop. The workshop was framed around;

Access to Public Appointments – Mid-Phase Report

- What is working, not working and what they had learnt over the first three months;
- The skills required to be a Board member and to think about the skills each participant wished to develop;
- The Public Appointments application process and preparing an application;
- Bob Benson, an NHS Tayside Board member gave a personal perspective of being a Board member.

Evaluation

Initial evaluation from the shadows showed that the experience has been widely positive. One member has already had an interview for a public appointment and is awaiting a decision. One of the mentors acknowledged the importance and positive impact of having, 'a different perspective in the room.' One Board has made changes to their website to make it more accessible in consultation with their shadow. Another Board has changed the layout of their Board papers and the format of their meetings.

However, many barriers are still present. Some of the issues that have arisen are often outside the control of the Board's concerned - inaccessible venues, parking etc. have caused barriers to participation. One shadow felt that negative attitudes created a barrier in getting to their Board meeting. They had to phone their mentor to come to reception to vouch for their authenticity in order to gain access to attend their meeting.

Outcomes

1. At least five disabled people will have shadowed a Board with mentorship from a specific Board member.
- **This has been met and exceeded as the scheme has six shadows.**

2. At least five disabled people will have increased their capacity to apply for a public appointment through experiential and practical training.
 - **This has been partially met. Shadows have already demonstrated and articulated that they are better placed to apply for a public appointment.**
3. At least five Boards will have received disability equality training and be able to demonstrate that they have built capacity and learning to be more inclusive.
 - **No Board has yet taken up the offer of disability equality training. There has been positive outcomes of adjustments that Boards have made that have had a positive impact. Some of the steps taken are outlined in the evaluation section of this report.**
4. A proportion of the Boards and participants will be located in rural and remote areas.
 - **Boards and shadows are spread across Scotland. We have Ayrshire and Arran NHS, Scottish Natural Heritage based in Inverness, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority, Independent Living Fund based in Livingston, NHS 24 (who meet mostly between Edinburgh and Glasgow venues), and the National Waiting Times Board who meet at the Golden Jubilee Hospital in Clydebank. It is worth noting that the Independent Living Fund and the National Waiting Times Board have a national remit. .**
5. An evaluation report will be produced providing recommendations based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected.
 - **We are collating ongoing monitoring and evaluation data which will contribute to the final report at the end of the pilot scheme.**

6. Support public body Boards to achieve aspects of the expectations on them in the Scottish Government's guidance on succession planning in being more diverse and representative of the wider Scottish population.
 - **There is an equal gender split of those shadows participating in the scheme.**
 - **The boards have been proactively encouraging the shadows to participate. Some shadows are also taking part on Board sub committees. We hope this will have a positive influence on succession planning and we will evaluate the impact in the final report.**

Conclusion

The project is going well. We are meeting outcomes as planned and there has been good learning all round. We expect to fully meet the project outcomes by the end of the cycle.