**Learning Disability England**

**Our response to questions about a Trustee’s role**

**19th October 2018**

**What this is about?** One of Learning Disability England’s trustees did something some of our members and friends do not agree with. This report explains what we have decided to do about it.

**Our decisions - summary**

* Learning Disability England does not agree with the CMG’s decision to make the service bigger
* Learning Disability England is happy to work with CMG or any provider to find a better way to support people have a good life
* Learning Disability England want to be clearer about what we disagree with and why
* Learning Disability England want to be better at acting quickly and clearly and fairly when members do things that we don’t agree with
* Learning Disability England will urgently write their policy on how trustees, Representative Body members and members need to act
* The Learning Disability England board decided to stand down last year – we decided that they will only be replaced by people who agree with the new policy
* Following these decisions, Peter Kinsey resigned from his role as Trustee

**The background:**

Peter Kinsey is a trustee at LDE. He is also the Chief Executive Officer at CMG. CMG challenged a decision CQC made under the Building the Right Support policy.

Some people said that, because LDE supports the ‘Building the Right Support’ policy, that Peter should not be allowed to continue as an LDE trustee.

We are pleased people told us what they thought. Working through this has helped LDE decide what to do on some important issues.

Learning Disability England includes many people in it who are very different. This makes us stronger. We are proud of all our differences and we think it’s important that we are made up of more than one group of people.

This means we are more likely to argue about things and disagree with each other. Some things can take us longer to make sure everyone gets a fair hearing.

**What Learning Disability England discussed and decided:**

The Representative Body and Trustees of LDE had a meeting to think about what everyone has said.

That meeting decided that ‘putting aims and values at the heart of our decisions’ means we must be brave enough to change if things aren’t working or tell people if we think they are wrong.

Our values are about people with learning disabilities being equal citizens, at the centre of decision making about their lives, with equal rights and opportunities to have relationships, a paid job, a place of their own, and other things that most non-disabled people take for granted.

We know that larger services are unlikely to achieve that. For some people with a learning disability, these larger units are unhappy, dangerous places. We know not every place is the same, but we agree that we do not want to support the building of large units. We want to help people understand why they are a bad idea.

We support the ‘Building the Right Support’ policy.

It says people are more likely to live a good life in smaller, community based settings. We also know that sometimes even small community services are not good.

Learning Disability England does not support CMG’s decision to try to increase the number of people supported at this service.

We think CMG should have found another way to deal with this problem. CMG are a member of LDE and we look forward to them being part of working out problems with other members.

We believe the trust we are developing between self-advocates, families, and service organisations helps people work together to find different, better solutions.

We want to work in ways that help people and organisations feel comfortable or safe to talk about problems or decisions honestly to work out good solutions.

**What we will change:**

All our Members will have to agree with our values and behave in ways that show this.

This is most important for our Trustees and Representative Body members. If people do not do this, we will ask them to leave.

We do not expect everyone to agree with everything LDE says about how to put our aims and values into practice. We will discuss and argue about these things in a fair and respectful way.

Sometimes, Trustees or Representative Body members will not do things we agree with. That might be OK if it does not happen often, but we will ask them to explain why. Based on these ideas the Representative Body members and Trustees at the meeting decided in this case they would not ask Peter to leave the board.

**What’s next?**

We will make it really clear to members of the Trustees and Representative Body that being one of those volunteers means you need to explain if you don’t follow our new policy. You might have to stop the role at LDE if your other work or volunteering conflicts with LDE’s policy.

We are going to finish our policy on governance and how members should act. We will do this in October and November.

We will share it when it is finished. We welcome members telling us what they think.

We are going to finish choosing new Trustees. All of the current Trustees, who helped set LDE up, agreed last year to step down so there can be more self-advocates and family carers on the Board. To make sure there is a good handover it will take a year for all the Trustees to change. We are planning for 3 or 4 new people to join every 4 – 6 months. We will make sure those people know about these decisions and what we expect and what they can expect being part of LDE.

We thank Peter for all of the time and support he gave the Housing and Support Alliance and later Learning Disability England as a Trustee.

**If you have questions or feedback for Learning Disability England**

We will keep sharing our work on this and are interested to get feedback or answer any questions our members or other people have.

You can get in touch with Samantha Clark if you want to talk about this or tell us anything.

Samantha is on Samantha.clark@LDEngland.org.uk or 07823536603