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**LEARNING DISABILITIES SERVICE**

**Café Connect iMatter**

Café Connect in Dumbarton Centre is a community café providing training, voluntary work and paid employment for people with learning disabilities. Managed by Work Connect, Learning Disabilities Service, West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership, the team comprises two Café Managers, two Catering Assistants, seven Café Workers and one Domestic Assistant. All of these individuals are employed by West Dunbartonshire Council.

There are eight staff members within the team who have learning disabilities and therefore required support to participate in staff surveys and recently the implementation of iMatter in West Dunbartonshire HSCP.

Careful co-ordination was required to ensure that the team were registered to receive a paper copy of the questionnaire; iMatter awareness session was delivered in a manner conducive to the team’s understanding and an independent advocate was on hand to support employees complete the paperwork.

It was important that individual staff members were able to record their views on staff governance, line management, organisational issues, and their personal and overall experience as employees of WDC HSCP. An independent advocate from Lomond and Argyle Advocacy Service was briefed on the iMatter requirements, attended the awareness session with the team and was then available in a pre-booked meeting room to meet people individually and support employees make their responses. Confidentiality was maintained throughout and completed questionnaires sealed in the addressed envelopes and returned.

The returned team reports were presented at a team meeting using the iMatter graphic layout which is easy to understand for colleagues with learning disabilities. We celebrated our successes and the team could visually see where improvements were required and put forward suggestions on how this could be achieved. One of our areas for improvement is to explore how communication and information from the wider organisation is more accessible to employees who have learning difficulties. Acknowledging the success of iMatter as a tool for celebration and improvement, the team will continue to endeavour their use of total communication to ensure organisational information is accessible for all. Our resulting action plan was done in consultation and agreement of the whole team with the support of a local advocate.

**Lorraine Davin**

Service Manager, Work Connect

28/11/ 2017