

Organisation Support Case Study

Self Directed Support Forth Valley

CVS Falkirk managed the RCOP Partnership Innovation Fund on behalf of public sector partners, which initially funded Vernon Alexander's post at SDSFV. This is how he first made contact with CVS Falkirk.

SDSFV provide free, independent and impartial support and guidance to those managing their own care in Forth Valley. The team work with service users to make them aware of the care management options available to them, and liaise between those individuals and their local authority regarding those options. This ensures service users have more choice in their own care, and that all parties involved, from user to service provider to local authority, are protected when it comes to the law.

During his time with SDSFV, Vernon has worked with CVS Falkirk on a number of occasions, particularly the Capacity Building team. "I think CVS are a very necessary organisation," he says, "especially in regards to governance in the third sector."

Vernon is well aware of the benefits of good governance, with a background in employment law. His time at SDSFV has seen a complete change in their board, which is now made up of "a mix between those with disabilities, or those with a personal interest in disabilities, and those providing the services used".

He stresses the importance of such a balanced board. "It's essential, especially when developing and setting policy within the third sector." In his experience, diversity within the board often results in questions being asked and criticisms raised when they should be. Which is a good thing.

"It makes you think," he says.

He applauds CVS Falkirk's efforts regarding board recruitment and diversity, including their work to set up the Get On Board information and events for those interested in becoming a charity board member.

"They've been great," he says. "They've asked all the right questions, focused on all the right areas – it's important to have all bases covered, and they've done that."

He talks about the effort the CVS Falkirk team have gone to in order to attract those who wouldn't normally think of themselves as board members. "It's useful on any board, having that balance of different skills, perspective and life experience, but especially in the third sector."

"It helps provide clarity and purpose, which results in stronger, better governance for the board, and the charity."