

*Scrutiny Review of Employment Practices for
people with learning or physical disabilities or
mental health issues*

March 2010

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1.0 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report, as outlined in the initial topic brief (at *Annex 1*) is to:

- ◆ Review current employment opportunities for people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issues in Halton.
- ◆ Develop an understanding of the financial processes around employment for these specific groups.
- ◆ Consider best practice and local examples in terms of supporting people into employment.
- ◆ Develop an understanding of corporate responsibilities in supporting vulnerable people into employment.
- ◆ Devise a series of recommendations and accompanying action plan to improve the authority's performance in relation to supported employment opportunities.

2.0 Structure of the Report

This report is structured with the introduction, a brief summary of the methodology followed by a description of current practice and performance, evidence, analysis with findings/conclusions and recommendations. The appendices include the topic brief, presentations and Action Plan.

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Reason the report was commissioned

As part of a Care Quality Commission performance assessment carried out in 2008, it was noted that, while Halton had supported more people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue into employment than was predicted, performance was still lower than comparators. Care Quality Commission also noted that targets set in relation to supported employment were relatively low.

Despite a number of interventions through employment and social care programmes in Halton, the number of people with learning disabilities progressing into employment remains low, and is significantly lower than north-west averages.

3.2 Policy and Performance Boards

This report was commissioned as a joint scrutiny topic with the Healthy Halton and the Employment, Learning & Skills Policy & Performance Boards.

3.3 Membership of the Topic Team

Membership of the Topic Team included:

Members	Officers
Cllr Ellen Cargill Cllr Eddie Jones Cllr Geoff Swift Cllr Bob Gilligan Cllr Martha Lloyd-Jones Cllr Pamela Wallace	Audrey Williamson – Operational Director, Adults' Services Stiofan O'Suillibhan – Divisional Manager Gerry Fitzpatrick – Divisional Manager Service Development representatives – Emma Bragger, Jo Burrows, Katy Rushworth

4.0 Methodology Summary

This scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means:

- Regular meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;
- Attendance at meetings by various key members of staff and external guests (detail of the attendees can be found in *Annex 2*);
- Provision of information; and
- Visits to a number of local authorities.

5.0 Current Practice – Halton Borough Council

Across the authority there are a number of initiatives underway to support people with disabilities into employment. These include jobs both within and external to the Council.

5.1 Day Services/Physical and Sensory Disability Employment Projects

The Day Services Employment Projects are open to service users from Adults with Learning Disabilities services, and are based on a tiered approach to capacity building and preparing for employment. The projects have a number of areas of focus as follows:

- Economic wellbeing
- Improved health and emotional wellbeing
- Equality of opportunity

Tier 1 – Country Garden Catering and Market Garden

The project provides service users with the fundamentals of catering through the Pebbles Project – a step-by-step approach to learning the basics of catering. The approach takes account of the varying needs levels of services users; with each user having a personalised support plan with clearly defined goals and access to relevant training.

Country Garden has one member of staff and approximately four service users accessing the project for two days a week. Within the market garden, there are approximately eight services users who prepare the land and grow the fruit and vegetables for use in the buffet and café projects.

Tier 2 – Country Garden Buffet Service

At Tier 2, service users are able to put into practice the skills developed during the time spent on Tier 1. The project operates five days per week with between five and six service users accessing the project daily. Some of the service users are in receipt of permitted earnings. The buffet service can cater for meetings and events for between 12 and 120 people. Any income generated is reinvested in the project. While taking part in the project, service users compile a portfolio detailing their skills and experience, their training objectives and any qualifications they have gained, such as Food Hygiene.

Tier 3 – Murdishaw Community Café

This tier represents further progression, and allows participants to develop ‘front of house’ skills in addition to furthering their catering knowledge. Some of the service users are in receipt of permitted earnings.

In 2007, Murdishaw Community Café won awards for Equality and Diversity and for Positive Action in recognition of the work done to provide service users with meaningful opportunities and developing skills towards employment.

Tier 3 – Cup Cakes and Market Garden

This project provides opportunities for service users with physical and/or sensory disabilities to develop skills specifically in confectionary and cake-making. Produce from Cup Cakes is sold to Norton Priory Café (see Tier 4), and to the Country Garden Buffet service. At current capacity, the project can produce 80 cakes per week, and income generated covers the cost of ingredients. The project runs on two days per week and eight service users volunteer over these days.

There is a wheelchair accessible garden at the Independent Living Centre which, once established, will provide fresh produce for the Cup Cakes, Buffet and Café projects.

Tier 4 – Norton Priory Café

This tier represents the culmination of the skills developed through the tiers. The café provides a range of hot and cold meals at a busy

Runcorn tourist attraction. Service users work in the kitchens, serving customers and carrying out 'front-of-house' tasks such as cleaning and laying tables. The café is open seven days per week and two members of staff support 16 service users who access the project on a rota basis. Two service users at the project are currently undertaking NVQ2 in Health and Social Care which incorporates health and safety and food hygiene.

5.2 Halton People Into Jobs (HPIJ) Employment Service for Disabled People

Halton People into Jobs is a Council service offering information, advice and guidance on a range of employment, learning and skills and business start up support services available direct from Halton People Into Jobs and local providers.

The help that Halton People Into Jobs can provide for individuals includes:

- Appointments with qualified advice and guidance workers available in the Halton People Into Jobs office and in 15 neighbourhood outreach locations across Widnes and Runcorn
- Helping to identify barriers to employment and/or learning, providing information, advice and guidance to develop an action plan to achieve work related goals
- Matching client skills and experience to local job opportunities
- Access to waged and unwaged work experience placements to improve practical work skills offering on the job training
- Work tasters and other personal development and employability skills training courses
- Financial assistance (certain eligibility conditions apply) to ease the transition from unemployment to work or to access training related to a job offer from an employer
- Access to business start up/self employment advice and practical help with business planning, finance and marketing
- In Work support for up to 26 weeks to help new employees with the transition into permanent or long term work
- Specialist Disability Employment Advisors
- Job Retention Service which provides advice to people who work but are off with ill health

The help that Halton People Into Jobs can provide for employers includes:

- Comprehensive and flexible recruitment support (large and small scale)
- Access to clients on work placement basis prior to taking on as employed

- Access to training for staff via Apprenticeships, Train to Gain or other employer demand training provision
- Promoting vacancies, identifying and matching candidates and managing applications to vacancies
- Arranging interviews and providing employer feedback to candidates on the employers behalf
- Redundancy service – Support for clients facing redundancy – on site information, advice and guidance and practical support
- Advise to employers on recruiting and retaining disabled people.

5.3 Mental Health Employment Project

In order to support people with mental health problems into work Halton's Mental Health team are operating in accordance with the principles of Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health's 'Individual Placement and Support' model (see Annex 3).

Employment Officer

An Employment Officer has been appointed to the Mental Health team. The post sits with the Community Bridge Builders, in order to ensure the widest possible links with mainstream services, and the post holder is also required to spend a significant amount of time within mental health services. They are involved with clinical assessments and reviews, support individual service users with job searching and seek employment opportunities for service users.

In-work Support

This phase of the project will be delivered by the Richmond Fellowship, a national charity with substantial experience of employment-focussed work and particular expertise in the Individual Placement and Support model. In-work support will be offered to both the employer and employee and will not be time-limited.

6.0 Current Performance

National Indicators 146 and 150 relate to supporting people known to social services or secondary mental health services into employment. There are no National Indicators relating to employment support for people with physical and/or sensory disabilities.

NI 146

'The percentage of adults with learning disabilities known to Councils with Adults Social Services Responsibilities (CASSRs) in paid employment at the time of their assessment or review'.

In 2008/09, Halton reported an outturn of 4.12% against this indicator. This performance put Halton 104th out of a possible 150 local authorities, and the authority compared unfavourably with the north-west average of 6.6%.

NI 150

‘The percentage of adults known to secondary mental health services in employment’.

The current outturn for this indicator for Halton is 11.1%. Whilst this figure puts the authority within the average range of between 10 and 15% in the northwest region, there is room for improvement.

In February 2010, the number of adults with learning disabilities supported in paid employment was 6 and the number of adults with mental health needs supported in paid employment was 5.

The number of adults with adults with learning disabilities supported in voluntary work as at February 2010, was 60. The number of adults with physical or sensory disabilities, supported in voluntary work was 7 and the number of adults with mental health needs supported in voluntary work was 12.

7.0 Evidence (summary of evidence gathered) and Analysis with findings/conclusions

7.1 Definitions

National Indicator 146 (full definition at Annex 4)

The definition states ‘This indicator is intended to improve the employment outcomes for adults with learning disabilities – a key group at risk of social exclusion.’ In order to include people in the outturn for this indicator they have to be ‘known to social services’. This means that they should have been reviewed or assessed in the preceding 12-month period, but may or may not have received a service. The nature of learning disabilities means that those people assessed by social services, and considered suitable for employment, are usually signposted to the Supported Employment service and cases are closed at that point. The indicator definition means that these people are not included in the outturn.

There is also a lack of clarity in terms of the number of hours a week a person has to work to be included in the outturn figures. According to the published definition, working for any number of hours (from 1 to more than 30) is accepted. However, verbal indications from Care Quality Commission have suggested that in the future it will only be acceptable to include those people who are working in excess of 16 hours per week.

Other conditions attached to this indicator define an ‘employee’ as someone who is employed by a company (or self-employed), paid at more than the minimum wage and whose National Insurance contributions are paid directly from their salary. This can include people in supported employment as long as the other conditions are met.

Conclusion

This definition limits the numbers of people who can be ‘counted’ towards the indicator by failing to recognise those people who are assessed and signposted to Supported Employment, and whose cases

are then 'closed', meaning that they are not known to social services. Adults with learning disabilities who are 'known' to social services tend to be people whose needs are moderate to severe, and for whom employment is infrequently an option. The Care Quality Commission should be encouraged to acknowledge the specific complex needs of this client group, which in many cases preclude employment in any form.

Being prescriptive about the number of hours that an individual has to work also limits the number of people who can be included in the outturn. In some instances, service users within this cohort will be unable to work more than a few hours a week due to their condition.

The restrictive nature of the definition does not allow Local Authorities to demonstrate the extent of the work being undertaken in this area. This can clearly be seen in the performance figures from 2008/09 for adults with learning disabilities supported into some form of paid work. There was 31 adults with learning disabilities supported, this figure equates to 4.12% when expressed per 10,000 population aged 18-64 which is 75184 in Halton.

There do not appear to be the same issues with National Indicator 150: clients known to secondary mental health services are more likely than learning disabled adults to be able to work, and service users within this cohort can be counted in the outturn regardless of the number of hours worked each week.

Recommendations:

- (i) Develop employment opportunities and examples of best practice as researched and observed from visits from and to other local authorities and complete a review on In House services and where possible broaden out to other departments within the Council***
- (ii) Senior managers within Adults and Community to seek further clarification from the Care Quality Commission regarding definitions used within NI 146, particularly in reference to the number of hours worked***
- (iii) Positive action target setting jobs and employment opportunities for adults with learning disabilities, those with physical or sensory disabilities and people with mental health issues and clarify the legal status of this i.e. positive action V positive discrimination***
- (iv) Ensure that all learning disability service users employed under permitted earnings rule are paid at or above minimum wage directly through the payroll system***
- (v) In relation to recommendation 4, ensure that service users are volunteering by agreement i.e. working longer than permitted earnings allow***

7.2 Partnership Working

To ensure the best employment opportunities are available to adults with disabilities and those with mental health problems, Halton Borough Council needs to work with partners such as Jobcentre Plus, the

Primary Care Trust and the local Hospital's Trust. A partnership approach to both creating appropriate vacancies and supporting people to get and retain employment is vital.

Recommendations:

- (i) Development of a Business Case i.e. why it pays partners to financially support employment projects for disabled people (removing people from benefits, how much does this save Job Centre Plus, reducing reliance on health services, how much does this save the Primary Care Trust***
- (ii) Development of a Business Case around Invest to Save initiative to identify savings from the Council's Community Care Budget that could be ring fenced to employ people with disabilities on at least minimum wage and provide sustainable employment***
- (iii) Longer-term partnership strategy in place to promote the employment of people with disabilities and those with mental health problems***
- (iv) Generation of support for paid employment opportunities and work placement schemes with local employers for disabled people***
- (v) Halton Borough Council and National Apprentices Service to explore the potential for the Council to become a Group Training Association to manage and deliver apprenticeships across the Borough***

7.3 Community Leadership – The Council as a Key Employer

Local Authorities have a role in providing community leadership. As part of this role the organisation should be striving to ensure that its workforce is representative of the community it serves. According to the most recent figures available, there are currently 34 people with disabilities employed by Halton Borough Council, which equates to approximately 1.7% of the workforce. Acknowledging that some people choose not to disclose their status in terms of disability, it is accepted that this figure may be slightly lower than the actual numbers of people with a disability employed by the Authority. However, given that in the 2001 Census, 22% of Halton residents reported having a Limiting Long Term Illness, and 8.8% of the population are claiming Disability Living Allowance, we have a long way to go in terms of making our workforce representative of our community.

There are a range of actions that should be considered by the authority in its role as the largest employer in the Borough, this will require buy-in from Human Resources and a general commitment across the authority.

Conclusion

In order to confidently promote the employment of disabled people to our partner organisations and other local employers, the Authority should be taking a lead.

Recommendations:

- (i) Apprenticeship Corporate Working Group to examine the feasibility of developing specific initiatives for people that may need additional support to get into and remain in employment***
- (ii) Staff Survey: Full and detailed staff survey to collect up to date information on the workforce, to include type of disability and update the Trent system***
- (iii) Consideration given to more user friendly methods of recruitment and selection which would open up access to jobs in the Council for disabled people***
- (iv) Positive action to identify or create jobs that are suitable for disabled people i.e. job carving***
- (v) Explore the feasibility of encouraging the employment of disabled people through procurement and commissioning processes***
- (vi) Vacancy Management programme in place to identify jobs which are suitable for people with disabilities or those with mental health issues***
- (vii) Disability Awareness training for all new staff through Corporate Induction and existing staff through Safeguarding training programme***
- (viii) Closer working relationships with Department for Work and Pensions Access to Work programme to support disabled people to move more easily into work***
- (ix) Establishment of an Officer/Member working group to examine and review the Council's progress in employing apprentices and disabled people***

7.4 Mental Health

The information for this section has been taken from the Disability Employment Network report, presented by the Divisional Manager for Mental Health Services to the Employment Topic Group in February 2010.

There is a National Indicator for employment for those accessing mental health services which is NI 150. The employment of people known to secondary mental health services. The message from central government was clear, that all people, including this group, should have the opportunity to access paid employment and that communities should work together to achieve this.

The process for delivering NI 150 in Halton was as follows:

- Embedding the process within the Disability Employment Network, to ensure a wide range of service responses

- Setting a baseline against which any improvements can be measured
- Identifying and agreeing a model of service delivery
- Identifying and allocating resources to deliver a specialist response
- Developing additional improvement processes with wider processes.

The Individual Placement and Support model by Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health has been adopted in Halton. This has a number of implications for local service delivery. In particular, it is increasingly apparent that a specialist service response is needed for people with this high level of need, rather than management through more general employment services. Locally, therefore, the approach that is being adopted is to employ specialist workers who can work directly with individuals, market them proactively to employers, then stay with both them and the employers for an extended period in their employment career. This involved very close working with mainstream employment services (to the extent that performance targets can be met by all organisations) but tailors the support needed to the particular client group.

Conclusion

The following steps have been taken in Halton to improve performance for National Indicator 150:-

- An internal employment officer has been appointed with strong links to mainstream employment services
- Contract developed with external provider Richmond Fellowship, which is a national mental health charity with substantial experience of employment-focused work and expertise in working to the Individual Placement Model
- Mental health employment group set up to support these services, with direct management input from mental health services. This group will have more structured links with JobCentre Plus.

This programme will only be able to be delivered by an effective multi-agency response to the issue, involving not just health and social care services but also the wide range of mainstream employment services will need to actively support the marketing and promotion of real work opportunities for people with complex mental health needs.

Recommendations:

- (i) Examine the potential to focus resources on service users with primary mental health issues i.e. anxiety and depression**
- (ii) Mental health and employment promotion i.e. awareness-raising with local employers to dispel some of the myths surrounding people with mental health problems**
- (iii) Detailed evaluation after first year of contract with Richmond Fellowship mental health employment project**

7.5 Adults with Learning Disabilities and Physical and Sensory Disabilities

The current “businesses” run by Adults with Learning Disabilities Day services include:

- Vine Street Kitchen
- Murdishaw Café
- Moorfield Kitchen
- Market Garden Service
- Cup Cake Catering
- Norton Priory Museum

The feedback at Norton Priory continues to be positive with customers commenting favourably on the quality, cost, variety and the friendliness of the service. Monthly meetings are held with Norton Priory Trust’s management team.

The Market Garden produce is sourced from: Hough Green, Deansway Allotments, Norton Priory Gardens and a small plot at Murdishaw Community Centre. This should make approximately 30% profits, but it will need a full year to generate maximum produce and provide the level of financial detail needed to forecast properly.

Cup Cake Catering takes around £600 per month. The group has no permanent staff support and will not be given such support in the future – the emphasis being on independence.

There are some new initiatives that are in progress at the moment. Details of which are given below:

Priory Ales Microbrewery (working title) is a new initiative. The proposal to establish a microbrewery at Norton Priory was approved by the Norton Priory Board of Trustees in July 2009. Beer production involves a great number of separate tasks, which will provide opportunities for a great number and wider range of people of all abilities.

Priory Tea Rooms is another new initiative and is in effect an extension of the successful refectory operation in the main building. It will extend the possibilities for people to experience and gain work.

“The Head Office” Hair Dressers (working title) – hairdressing has been a feature of Pingot for years. By transferring the hairdressers to a real shop in a real place with real customers we can produce a real business with real jobs and real job satisfaction. The strategy is to target people with disabilities in an attempt to corner a niche market. Experience indicates that those with a disability will feel safer and more at home in a business designed to meet their needs and staffed by people who may share those needs.

The Chuckie Chicken Sanctuary (working title) is a new project for ex battery chickens to provide eggs for the catering projects, primary schools will also be

encouraged to visit as a petting sanctuary. It also has the potential in the future to develop into an urban farm.

Dorset Gardens café will operate seven days per week between the hours of 9.30am-2pm for a number of residents (30). The service will provide further opportunities for work and work experience and will add to the financial viability of Country Garden Catering.

Myers Meadow (working title), was an unused garden area inside the Moorfield Road establishment, which has been planted with fruit trees and soft fruit beds. The produce will contribute to the menus of the catering service and have an indisputable provenance. It will also contribute to the financial viability of the market gardens. The official launch is under preparation.

Independent Living Centre Raised Beds Project – Work on developing the land next the Independent Living Centre extension to turn it into a market garden is very near completion. Twelve raised beds have been built to provide accessible gardening opportunities for people using wheelchairs. This project has the potential to be developed into a small garden centre as well as selling the produce to the catering services of Country Garden Catering.

Conclusion

Adults with Learning Disabilities Provider Services is committed to developing and pursuing employment opportunities for people with all disabilities. In addition to the catering and market garden enterprises Provider Services have found placements at the Stadium, Norton Priory Walled Gardens, Catalyst House Museum. Those in placements are in receipt of permitted earnings and include people with mental health problems, PSD service users and will include young people leaving care in the very near future.

When Provider Services finds a job opportunity outside of its own jurisdiction Bridge Builders are immediately involved. Once initiated Bridge Builders match a person to the job and support the individual until both employee and employer are satisfied that the relationship works. At this stage the individual is passed onto Enterprise and Employment Services who process the Permitted Earnings. In the event of difficulties after the introductory phase Bridge Builders will return to provide further support if necessary.

At a meeting held on 12th February 2009 with the Operational Director for Adults of Working Age, the Divisional Manager for Adults with Learning Disabilities Provider Services, the Head of Enterprise and Employment and the Principle Manager for Bridge Builders it was agreed that Environment would deliver 10 service users by the 31st March 09 to the 10 service users paid via Country Garden Catering, therefore, achieving a total of 20 for 2008/09 for adult with learning disabilities on Supported Permitted work. This was achieved and the Department met the Local Indicator Target for the three star rating.

The 2009/10 target would need to rise to 30, which equated to an additional 10 people with learning disabilities in employment. Country Garden Catering

is in a position to pay the additional 10 required to meet the 2009/10 target if necessary, however, it would make sense for the target to be shared particularly with employment services.

Recommendations:

- (i) To ensure that the Council employment projects offering work opportunities to service users meet the minimum health, safety and hygiene standards required in any workplace***
- (ii) To contribute to the Business Case explaining why it pays partners to financially support employment projects that employ people with learning disabilities***
- (iii) Review the Council employment projects with learning disabled service users with a view to increasing the capacity for paid employment. Detailed financial analysis and service user consultation required***

8.0 Overall Conclusion

This scrutiny review has been a useful exercise in reviewing current practices and procedures for employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities, physical or sensory disabilities or mental health needs in Halton. The opportunity for exploring areas of best practice from other local authorities in this area was also taken. Exploration as to how examples of best practice can be instilled in Halton have formed some of the recommendations of this report, however it was evident from this research undertaken, that a number of key objectives around employment opportunities are already being delivered in Halton. Financial analysis of current employment projects was undertaken in order to assess how and what future opportunities could be identified and developed for pan disability service users or those with mental health needs.

The recommendations from the scrutiny review have been arranged into an Action Plan at Annex 5 for ease of reference and monitoring.

TOPIC BRIEF

Topic Title: Employment opportunities for people with learning or physical disability or mental health issue

Officer Lead: Gerry Fitzpatrick/Stiofan O'Suillibhan

Planned start date: July 2009

Target PPB Meeting: March 2010 (it is anticipated that this will be a joint scrutiny topic with the Employment, Learning & Skills Policy and Performance Board)

Topic Description and scope:

An examination of the current processes involved in supporting those service users known to social care, who have a learning or physical disability or a mental health issue into appropriate employment.

Why this topic was chosen:

From the CSCI (Commission for Social Care Inspection) performance assessment report carried out July-September 2008, it was noted that Halton Borough Council has helped more people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue into employment than it had planned, but that this was still lower than comparator Councils. As a result this was identified by CSCI as an area for development/improvement.

Key outputs and outcomes sought:

- Exploration on how employment opportunities for people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue are identified
- An understanding of the complexities of the financial processes/issues around employment for people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue
- Raise awareness of the service provided to service users known to Social Care
- Develop an action plan to ensure that CSCI targets are met and that the service continues to develop
- Consider national best practice in terms of supporting people into employment opportunities
- An understanding of the Corporate responsibilities in supporting vulnerable people into employment

Which of Halton's 5 strategic priorities this topic addresses and the key objectives and improvement targets it will help to achieve:

Improving Health: N/A

Halton's Urban Renewal N/A

A Safer Halton N/A

Children and Young People in HaltonN/A

Employment Learning & Skills in Halton

Key Objective C: To promote and increase the employability of local people and to remove any barriers to employment and get more people into work

Nature of expected/desired PPB input:

Member led scrutiny review of the employment opportunities for people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue.

Preferred mode of operation:

- Review of current employment opportunities for people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue
- Benchmarking with comparative local authorities
- Visits/meetings including:

Job Centre Plus

Service Users – someone who has used the service

Providers

5BP

LSC (Learning Skills Council)

Warrington Disability Employment Forum

Agreed and signed by:

PPB chair

Officer

Date

Date

Methodology Detail

a) Details of Presentations, Guest Speakers and Visits undertaken

The following officers/guests gave presentations as part of this scrutiny review:

Name	Date	Title of Presentation
Rachel Roberts-Newton and Sarah Sturmeay, Pure Innovations	30 th September 2009	Pure Innovations Presentation on Employment Initiatives in Stockport and other Local Authorities
Name		Visits Undertaken
Members of Employment Topic Group	9 th August 2009	Halton Borough Council Learning Disability Employment Projects
Members of Employment Topic Group	20 th October 2009	Derbyshire County Council
Name	Date	Guest Speaker
Hazelle Jones, Divisional Manager Human Resources HBC	3 rd December 2009	Information provided regarding the Human Resources Team practices, Halton Borough Council
Lindsay Smith, Divisional Manager Mental Health Services HBC	18 th February 2010	Presented information regarding the Halton Disability Employment Network report

b) Research Undertaken

- Lancashire County Council Apprentice Model Briefing Note, Gerry Fitzpatrick

Healthy Halton PPB Topic Group - Apprentice Briefing Note

Lancashire County Council Apprentice Model

Background

1.1. Lancashire County Council employ over 43,000 people spread across a wide geographical area that encompasses 12 district Councils where there are both prosperous and deprived communities. The Council is the second largest employer after the NHS and serves many multi-cultural societies.

1.2. As a large employer LCC often finds it necessary to supplement its workforce with agency staff to cover short, medium and long term absences and also to fill temporary jobs. In 2007/8 LCC spent £8.1m on agency related staff costs. The agency staff used cover a wide spectrum of occupational areas, however a significant number have been in business administration, finance/IT and customer service.

1.3. LCC recognised that as a key employer in Lancashire and a corporate partner in the Local Area Agreement that it had the opportunity to support economic development and social inclusion priorities by redirecting work opportunities from agencies by directly recruiting staff.

1.4. The Corporate HR and Economic Development Departments worked together to develop an apprenticeship programme aimed at recruiting and training 50 apprentices to support the work of the business admin, finance and customer services teams based in the County Hall in Preston.

1.5. Apprenticeship Programme

Apprentices are not supernumerary; they are recruited through open and competitive selection, are offered a two-year training contract and paid entry level Scale 1/2 (£11,995p.a.) on starting work. Apprenticeships are open to candidates of all ages i.e. 16-60 years. A two-year placement provides them with the opportunity to gain a breadth of experience within the organisation. Apprentices have access to:

- NVQ level 2 and/or level 3 training with LSC approved providers
- LCC's portfolio of corporate training
- a workplace supervisor/mentor that has been trained
- support from a nominated HR Apprentice Officer

1.6. Approach to Apprenticeships

- converting eligible employees to apprentices (NVQ 2 & 3)
- vacancy management – all recruitment including requests for agency staff must go via HR to determine if there is an apprentice opportunity
- pre-employment workshops for interested candidates to prepare for interview selection process
- selection & appointment – normal recruitment criteria/qualifications must be satisfied

1.7. Reducing Worklessness - Work Preparation Programmes

In order to support economic development and social inclusion priorities LCC have piloted and introduced several work preparation initiatives that have complimented the Apprentice Programme.

- ***Future Horizons*** has been developed to provide young people that are NEET and care leavers that are on Entry 2 Employment LSC provision with the opportunity to gain an 8 week work experience placement within LCC for between 16 – 30 hours per week. Eligible trainees receive EMA. Trainees are given the opportunity to participate in pre-employment workshops aimed at helping them to apply for the Apprenticeship Programme.

- **Future Horizons+** is a bespoke pre-employment programme for care leavers to gain an extended period of paid work experience (LSC recommended training allowance £95 p.w.) within LCC Departments of up to 12 months duration. Trainees are given extra support to gain pre-level 2 vocational qualifications and additional support to help them to compete for apprentice opportunities when they are advertised.
- **Work Start – Public Sector Work Trial** has been developed in partnership with JCP for priority customers living in Lancashire i.e. lone parents, people with health conditions & disabilities claiming Income Support or Incapacity benefit, JSA 6 months+. Participants are offered 30 day work placement in LCC and receive a travel & subsistence allowance paid by JCP, at the end of the placement they are provided with a work reference and a certificate of completion.

Trainees that successfully complete the pre-employment programmes are given the opportunity to join the **Talent Pool** where they can apply for jobs that arise within LCC including temporary assignments through the contracted recruitment agency.

1.8. The Business Case.

During 2006/7, LCC recruited more than 80 apprentices through the programme and achieved savings of £569,000 on the previous years spend. In 2008/9 the savings achieved on agency staff costs were in excess of £1m and since 2006 LCC has employed 284 apprentices. The HR Department now recruits apprentices across all Council Departments including teaching assistants, care workers, road workers, construction workers, motor vehicle and outdoor workers. The District Councils that make up LCC have adopted the model and are now starting to employ apprentices and to recruit through the Talent Pool.

2. National Apprenticeship Service

2.1. The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was launched in April 2009 as one of the successor organisation to the LSC and it has the remit to drive forward the Governments ambition for apprenticeships aiming to bring about a significant growth in the number of employers offering apprenticeships.

2.2 There are three types of apprenticeships:

- Apprenticeships (equivalent to 5 GCSE's at grades C and above) work towards work-based learning qualifications i.e. NVQ level 2, Key Skills Certificate (literacy, numeracy & ITC skills) and in most cases a relevant Technical Certificate which is a knowledge based qualification such as a BTeC. Completion of an apprenticeship allows entry to an Advanced Apprenticeship.
- Advanced Apprenticeships (equivalent to 2 'A' level passes) work towards a work-based learning qualifications i.e. NVQ level 3, Key Skills Certificate (literacy, numeracy & ITC skills) and in most cases a

relevant Technical Certificate which is a knowledge based qualification such as a BTeC. To start this programme entrants must have 5 GCSE's at grades C and above or have completed an Apprenticeship.

- Higher Apprentices work towards a work-based learning qualification i.e. NVQ level 4 and in some cases a knowledge based qualification such as a Foundation degree.

2.3. Apprentices can progress to higher education, including university degrees but university graduates and those with qualifications above level 4 are not eligible for apprenticeship support.

2.4. NAS have commissioned Lancs CC to provide consultancy advice and support to other Local Authorities that are contemplating adopting or modifying the apprentice model that they have developed. Anne-Marie Morgan, Head of HR Consultancy at Lancs CC has offered to provide support to HBC to develop a customised approach to developing an apprentice model in Halton.

NAS and Halton BC

2.5 Several meetings have been held with NAS who are very keen to work in partnership with the Council to improve the numbers of employers in Halton that offer apprenticeships particularly to young people aged 16-18 and young people aged 19-24 that are NEET.

2.6. NAS are very impressed with the number of employer based apprenticeships that have been created through the WNF APT4U Project which provides private sector employers with an apprentice recruitment incentive of £2,000. NAS are keen to explore how their funding could add value to the APT4U initiative, and they are particularly interested in increasing the number of apprenticeships offered by the Council and other public sector employers and hold up the Lancs CC model as an example of best practice which won a National Apprentice Award in 2009.

2.7. In order to increase the take up of apprenticeships NAS are keen to develop Group Training Associations (GTA) which are funded collaborative initiatives involving groups of employers and/or training providers to develop joint apprenticeship programmes that operate across industrial sectors or geographical areas.

Instead of contracting with a variety of individual apprentice providers, NAS would passport the apprenticeship funding (£7,500 per apprentice place on average) to the GTA who would either directly deliver the apprenticeships or broker with existing apprentice providers to deliver the apprentice frameworks to meet the needs of employers.

2.8. NAS are very keen to explore the potential for the Council to become a geographical based GTA in Halton that would broker the delivery of apprenticeships to both private and public sector organisations. Should there be support for such a proposal an outline business case will be worked up.



Annex 3

Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health's Individual Placement and Support Model

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) in mental health has seven key elements:

1. It aims to get people into competitive employment
2. It is open to all those who want to work
3. It tries to find jobs consistent with people's preferences
4. It works quickly
5. It brings employment specialists into clinical teams
6. It provides time unlimited, individualised support for the person and their employer
7. Benefits counselling is included

Indicator Definitions for Nation Indicator 146 and 150

NI 146: Adults with learning disabilities in employment

The percentage of adults with learning disabilities known to Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities (CASSRs) in paid employment at the time of their assessment or latest review.

Adults with learning disabilities known to CASSRs: Learning disabled clients aged 18-64 who are assessed or reviewed in the financial year and who have received a service, as well as those who are assessed and/or reviewed but who have not received a service.

Paid employment is measured using the following categories:

1. Working as a paid employee or self-employed (30 or more hours per week)
2. Working as a paid employee or self –employed (16 to less than 30 hours per week)
3. Working as a paid employee or self-employed (more than 4 to less than 16 hours per week)
4. Working as a paid employee or self employed (more than 0 to 4 hours per week)
5. Working regularly as a paid employee or self –employed but less than weekly (e.g. fortnightly, monthly or on some other regular basis)

Employee: Those who work for a company and have their National Insurance paid for directly from their wages and are earning at or above the National Minimum Wage. This also includes those who are working in *supported employment* (i.e. those who are receiving support and assistance from a specialist agency to maintain their job) who are earning at or above the National Minimum Wage.

Self employed: Those who work for themselves and generally pay their National Insurance themselves. This should also include those who are unpaid family workers (i.e. those who do unpaid work for a business they own or for a business a relative owns).

Categories 1-5 above are to be combined to report on the per cent of learning disabled clients known to CASSRs in paid employment.

The indicator will also collect data on those in voluntary unpaid work using the following categories:

- Working as a paid employee or self-employed **and** in unpaid voluntary work
- In unpaid voluntary work only

Unpaid voluntary work: Work of a voluntary nature that is unpaid, including unpaid work experience.

The unpaid voluntary work categories are **not** to be included in the count of those who are in paid employment.

Data for this indicator is to be reported by gender and type of service that the client is receiving, that is, community based service, residential care service or no services.

- Community based services are services provided to support clients living in the community
- Residential care services include the following:
 - LA residential care (excludes short term residential). Residential care provided by the CASSR
 - Independent sector residential care (excludes short-term residential). Includes residential care provided by another CASSR. Also includes adult fostering
 - Nursing care (excludes short-term residential)

NI 150: Adults receiving secondary mental health services in employment

The percentage of adults receiving secondary mental health services in paid employment at the time of their most recent assessment, formal review or other multi-disciplinary care planning meeting.

Adults receiving secondary mental health services: Those aged 18-69 who are receiving secondary mental health services and who are on the Care Programme Approach.

Employment status is recorded using the following categories:

- Employed
- Unemployed
- Other including education or training
- Not disclosed
- Not applicable
- Not known

Employed: Those who are employed by a company and have their National Insurance paid for directly from their wages. It also includes those who are *self employed* (i.e. those who work for themselves and generally pay their

National Insurance themselves); those who are in *supported employment*; and those who are in *permitted work* (i.e. those who are in paid work and who are also receiving Incapacity Benefit).

Unemployed: Those who are *not* in paid work but are actively seeking work and are available to start, or are waiting to start a paid job they have already obtained.

Other including education or training: This category includes those who are economically inactive, that is, those who are *not* in paid work and who are not actively seeking work, or they are *not* available to start. It includes the following:

- *Students* who are undertaking full (at least 16 hours per week) or part-time (less than 16 hours per week) education or training and who are *not* working or actively seeking work;
- The *long term sick or disabled*, including those who are receiving Incapacity Benefit, income support or both, and who are not working or actively seeking work;
- Those *looking after the family or home* and who are *not* working or actively seeking work;
- Those who are *not receiving benefits* and who are not working or actively seeking work;
- Those who are in *unpaid voluntary work* who are not working or actively seeking work;
- Those of working age who have *retired* from paid work

Not disclosed: Patient was asked but refused to respond

Not applicable: Patient has not received secondary mental health services or is not in the working age group

Not Known: Patient's employment status is not known.

The employed category above is to be used to report on the per cent of adults receiving secondary mental health services in paid employment.

Action Plan

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
1	7.1 Definitions	Develop employment opportunities and examples of best practice as researched and observed from visits from and to other Local Authorities and complete a review of In House services and where possible broaden out to other departments within the Council	Stiofan O'Suillibhan (Divisional Manager Community Services) and Gerry Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
2	7.1 Definitions	Senior Managers within Adult & Community to seek further clarification from the Care Quality Commission regarding definitions used within NI 146, particularly in reference to the number of hours worked	Adults & Community Senior Management Team with support from Amanda Lewis (Principle	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
			Performance & Improvement Officer, Adults & Community)			
3	7.1 Definitions	Positive action target setting jobs and employment opportunities for adults with learning disabilities, those with physical or sensory disabilities and people with mental health issues and clarify the legal status of this i.e. positive action V positive discrimination	Chief Officers Management Team supported by: Stiofan O'Suillibhan (Divisional Manager, Community Services); Gerry Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment) And	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
			Lindsay Smith (Divisional Manager, Mental Health)			
4	7.1 Definitions	Ensure that all Learning Disability service users employed under permitted earnings rule are paid at or above minimum wage directly through the payroll system	Gerry Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
5	7.1 Definitions	In relation to recommendation 4, ensure that service users are volunteering by agreement i.e. working longer than permitted earnings allow	All managers who employ staff through Permitted Earnings	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
6	7.2 Partnership Working	Development of a "Business Case" i.e. why it pays partners to financially support employment projects for disabled people (removing people from benefits, how much does this save Job Centre Plus?, reducing reliance on health services, how much does this save the Primary Care Trust?	Audrey Williamson (Operational Director, Prevention & Commissioning)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
7	7.2	Development of a Business Case	Adult &	Progress		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
	Partnership Working	around Invest to Save initiative to identify savings from the Council's Community Care Budget that could be ring fenced to employ people with disabilities on at least minimum wage and provide sustainable employment	Community Senior Management Team. Proposal to be developed by Gerry Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment)	updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
8	7.2 Partnership Working	Longer-term partnership strategy in place to promote the employment of people with disabilities and those with mental health problems	Disability Employment Network. Lead Officer: Gerry Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
9	7.2 Partnership Working	Generation of support for paid employment opportunities and work placement schemes with local employers for disabled people	Disability Employment Network. Lead Officer: Gerry	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
			Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment)	Meeting		
10	7.2 Partnership Working	Halton Borough Council and National Apprentice Service to explore the potential for the Council to become a Group Training Association to manage and deliver apprenticeships across the Borough.	Strategic Apprenticeship Working Group. Lead Officer: Wes Rourke (Operational Director, Employment, Economic Regeneration & Business Services) and Jane Burgess (Divisional Manager, Human Resources)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
11	7.3 Community Leadership	Apprenticeship Corporate Working Group to examine the feasibility of developing specific initiatives for people that may need additional support to get into and remain in employment	Wes Rourke (Operational Director, Employment, Economic Regeneration & Business Services)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
12	7.3 Community Leadership	Staff Survey: Full and detailed staff survey to collect up to date information on the workforce, to include type of disability and update the Trent system	Jane Burgess (Divisional Manager, Human Resources)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
13	7.3 Community Leadership	Consideration given to more user friendly methods of recruitment and selection which would open up access to jobs in the Council for disabled people	Jane Burgess (Divisional Manager, Human Resources)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
14	7.3 Community Leadership	Positive action to identify or create jobs that are suitable for disabled people i.e. to consider job carving	Jane Burgess (Divisional Manager, Human Resources) with support from Gerry	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
			Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment)			
15	7.3 Community Leadership	Explore the feasibility of encouraging the employment of disabled people through procurement and commissioning processes.	Lorraine Cox (Divisional Manager, Procurement) and Gerry Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
16	7.3 Community Leadership	Vacancy Management programme in place to identify jobs which are suitable for people with disabilities or those with mental health issues	Jane Burgess (Divisional Manager, Human Resources)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
17	7.3 Community	Disability awareness training for all new staff through Corporate Induction	Brian Hilton (Learning &	Progress updates to		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
	Leadership	and existing staff through Safeguarding training programme	Development Manager)	be provided at each PPB Meeting		
18	7.3 Community Leadership	Closer working relationships with Department for Work and Pensions Access to Work programme to support disabled people to move more easily into work.	Gerry Fitzpatrick (Divisional Manager, Enterprise & Employment) and Job Centre Plus	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
19	7.3 Community Leadership	Establishment of an Officer/Member working group to examine and review the Council's progress in employing apprentices and disabled people	Alex Villiers (Divisional Manager, Scrutiny)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
20	7.4 Mental Health	Examine the potential to focus resources on service users with primary mental health issues i.e. anxiety and depression	Lindsay Smith (Divisional Manager, Mental Health)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
21	7.4 Mental Health	Mental health and employment promotion i.e. awareness-raising with local employers to dispel some of the myths surrounding people with mental health problems	Lindsay Smith (Divisional Manager, Mental Health) and Gerry Fitzpatrick, Divisional Manager, Enterprise and Employment)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
22	7.4 Mental Health	Detailed evaluation after first year of contract with Richmond Fellowship mental health employment project.	Lindsay Smith (Divisional Manager, Mental Health)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
23	7.5 Learning Disabilities	To ensure that the Council employment projects offering work opportunities to service users meet the minimum health, safety and hygiene standards required in any workplace.	Stiofan O'Suillibhan (Divisional Manager, Community Services)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		
24	7.5 Learning	To contribute to the Business Case explaining why it pays partners to	Stiofan O'Suillibhan	Progress updates to		

Action No.	Section	Recommendation	Responsible People	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
	Disabilities	financially support employment projects that employ people with learning disabilities	(Divisional Manager, Community Services)	be provided at each PPB Meeting		
25	7.5 Learning Disabilities	Review the Council employment projects for learning disabled service users with a view to increasing the capacity for paid employment. Detailed financial analysis and service user consultation required	Stiofan O'Suillibhan (Divisional Manager, Community Services)	Progress updates to be provided at each PPB Meeting		