

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**ADULT SERVICES
CABINET MEMBER**

EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

1 OBJECT AND BRIEF SUMMARY OF SUBJECT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet Member endorsement of 'Bigger and Better Lives Through Employment' (please see Appendix 1) and support for a local event that promotes employment for people with a learning disability across North Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 To recognise the work of the Learning Disability Partnership in developing an Employment Strategy for people with a learning disability

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In 2001, the original Department of Health Valuing People Strategy for people with learning disabilities and their families set a clear objective around employment. This was "to enable more people with learning disabilities to participate in all forms of employment, wherever possible in paid work and to make a valued contribution to the world of work".

Despite this clear objective, opportunities for people with learning disabilities to find jobs has remained limited at both a national and local level.

- 2.2 At a national level a number of actions have been taken to improve the current situation, these include: -
- A cross government working group led by the Department of Works and Pensions, developing an action plan to increase the number of people into paid work in response to the report "Improving Work Opportunities for people with a learning disability".
 - The Department of Works and Pensions is reviewing its employment services for disabled people generally, aiming to make services more flexible.
- 2.3 In North Lincolnshire the Learning Disability Partnership Board has employment as one of its key priorities. There is an employment sub-group of the board linked to the Local Strategic Partnership economic

development work stream. The sub-group has a cross section of members from across the council, schools, colleges, employment services, individuals with learning disabilities and family carers.

- 2.4 The sub-group has developed a strategy that has been turned into an accessible document by one of the council partners. The strategy has a key vision to help people in employment regardless of their disabilities.

3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The employment sub-group of The North Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership Board will continue to meet with the aim of monitoring and driving forward the objectives and performance indicators within 'Bigger and Better Lives Through Employment'. The council is a large employer within the public sector and the endorsement of 'Bigger and Better Lives Through Employment' will demonstrate a lead in positive employment practices that increase opportunities for people with a learning disability
- 3.2 The Learning Disability Partnership Board sub-group will continue to meet, however, the council may choose not to support the strategy or public event.

4 ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The employment sub-group and the Learning Disability Partnership Board overall would wish to see the council endorsing the strategy publicly and working with its partners to achieve employment outcomes for people with a learning disability
- 4.2 The council will not meet its responsibilities and priorities in respect of supporting disabled people to gain employment.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

Long term gains may be had in terms of redirecting people's over-dependency on Adult Social Services when employment opportunities increase. However predicting accurately the impact is not possible at this time.

5.2 Staffing

Training for staff to support individuals to access work skills and opportunities will be required. This is in line with the government's personalisation agenda.

5.3 Property Implications

None

5.4 IT Implications

None

6 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Diversity Implications

A Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed.

6.2 There are no other implications.

7 **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 'Bigger and Better Lives Through Employment' has been circulated to all key partners who have commented on the strategy and supported its development.

7.2 Trades Unions have been consulted and have raised no concerns regarding this report.

8 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member endorses 'Bigger and Better Lives Through Employment' and supports a public launch early in 2009.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Valuing People Now, and Improving Work Opportunities for people with a Learning Disability

Attachments

Appendix 1 - Accessible version of 'Bigger and Better Lives Through Employment'

North Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership Board



Bigger and better lives through employment

Our plan about how to make sure people with a learning disability in North Lincolnshire have the same chances as other people to have a job

April 2008

What is this plan about?



North Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership Board thinks it is very important that people with a learning disability can have a job just like everyone else.



A group of people who are part of the Partnership Board meet to talk about how to make this happen. The group is called the **employment sub-group**.

Here are some of the people in the group

- carers
- people with a learning disability who are self-advocates
- people who work for schools, colleges and education centres
- people who run services that help people get jobs
- charities and groups who work with volunteers
- groups who run services, such as health services

The group thinks that these things should happen when someone with a learning disability has a job



- ✓ the person should be paid
- ✓ the job should be a real job and something the person wants to do
- ✓ the person should get the training they need
- ✓ the person should be able to keep learning new skills and get the right support to go for better jobs if they want to



What has the group been working on?

The group has been



- ✓ looking at what it is like now for people with a learning disability who want a job. This has helped the group to see what needs to be done.



- ✓ seeing what other work is happening around the country that the group can join in with. And helping more work to be done in the local area to help people with a learning disability to have a job.



- ✓ making a plan. The plan talks about what the group can do to help more people with a learning disability have a job.

The group wants to



- ✓ Make sure there is 1 main place where people with a learning disability can go to get help and advice about getting a job.



- ✓ Make sure people with a learning disability have good chances to learn things in schools and colleges that will help them get a job later on.



- ✓ Work with families to help young people make plans about their lives. The plans will talk about lots of things, such as getting a job.



- ✓ Make sure people get the training and support they need to get and keep a job.



- ✓ Help people with a learning disability to make choices about jobs.

The group also wants to



- ✓ Help employers to understand why it is good and important to give jobs to people with a learning disability. (Employers are the people who give other people jobs.)



- ✓ Check how well these things are going. And make sure everyone does what they say they will do.

We think these things need to happen next



- ✓ There needs to be some changes to the group. For example, the name of the group could change to the Employment Partnership group.
- ✓ These people should be part of the group
 - people who are in charge of other groups and make big decisions
 - people with a learning disability who use services
 - family carers



- ✓ There should be a person in charge of each project the group does. This person can tell the rest of the group how that project is going and make sure the project is working well.



- ✓ The group needs to find the best way to keep checking its work to make sure it is going well. The group can then tell the rest of the Partnership Board how its work is going. And the group can ask the Partnership Board for their help if they need to.

Why is the group doing this work?



- People with a learning disability do not have the same chances as other people to have a job.



- The Government is doing some work at the moment to help change this.



- For example, the Government is making a plan about how to make sure more people with a learning disability can have a job.

The plan will look at things like

- ✓ making it easier for people with a learning disability to get a job, including people who need a lot of support



- ✓ helping other groups to give jobs to people with a learning disability

- ✓ helping young people with a learning disability make choices about their lives earlier on



- ✓ making sure each person with a learning disability can get the right support for them

- ✓ making sure the Government and the groups it works with give more jobs to people with a learning disability

