

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 FEBRUARY 2010

VALUING EMPLOYMENT NOW: REPORT OF THE TASK GROUP

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report the work undertaken by the Task Group examining the implications of the National Strategy – Valuing Employment Now.
- 1.2 To seek the Committee's support for the work undertaken and guidance about remaining future work.

2.0 VEN Task Group 2010

- 2.1 This report forms the basis of an intended report to the Executive.
- 2.2 At your September meeting you appointed a Task Group, comprising County Councillors David Peart (Chairman), Melva Steckles, Brain Marshall and Herbert Tindall.
- 2.3 Activity undertaken by the Task Group has included:
 - 1. A training session, attended by your Chairman, organised by Inclusion North on meeting the aspirations of Valued in Public.
 - 2. Two meetings with Adult and Community Services Directorate representatives and officers from Supported Employment.

3.0 Objectives of the Task Group Review

- 3.1 The review started on the basis the scope of its work would be to assess and contribute to our and our partners' preparedness for the implications of Valuing Employment Now. The knowledge gained so far, together with the support of the Directorate means this review properly supported can come forward with recommendations and proposals about how we and our partners might respond.
- 3.2 The group has been able to identify the main implications of VEN, which reach beyond the specific aims of the strategy; arguably they will be the driver for a different approach from Adult and Community Services for supporting people, not just those with a Learning Disability, in the community.

3.3 The task group has identified the development issues outlined below which it now intends to be the focus of its work. The Group believed it is important that it reported early in the process so that you understand the scale of the task ahead and can help steer and guide the work from an early stage.

4.0 Valuing Employment Now: Real Jobs for People with Learning Disabilities.

4.1 This summer saw the release of a cross departmental strategy entitled Valuing Employment Now: Real Jobs for People with Learning Disabilities.

4.2 The strategy aims to close the employment gap between those with learning disabilities and the disabled population as a whole by increasing the number of real jobs available and ensuring the appropriate support.

4.3 The overall goal is to increase radically the number of people with moderate and severe learning disabilities in employment by 2025.

4.4 The more specific overall goal is that as many adults with moderate and severe learning disabilities are employed as in the disabled population generally.

4.5 The relative lack of progress in improving the employment rate of people with learning disabilities compared to progress in this area with the disabled population generally is presented as a key reason for this strategy being produced. It is intended to help local authorities fulfil their obligations under the socially excluded adults Public Service Agreement (PSA 16).

4.6 The National Programme Board for Learning Disabilities will oversee the delivery of the strategy. A Cross Government National Delivery team will support regional and local implementation. The National Director for Learning Disabilities, Learning Disability Partnership Boards, Deputy Regional Directors, Strategic Health Authorities and Local Authorities also have defined roles in implementation.

4.7 It is suggested in this document that public bodies should set an example to other employers in employing people with learning disabilities.

5.0 Aims/Principles of the Strategy

- Growing the presumption of employability, people with LD can work and have careers, this is a message that we must move to get across from an early age.

- All sectors must look to joint working to create employment paths for individual.
- Better work preparation at school, college and adult learning.
- The role of personal budgets and social care - Personal Budgets can and should be used to buy support to get and keep a job. Person Centred Planning should be used to help individuals think about their aspirations for work.
- Increasing high quality job coaching.
- Clearing up confusion about the benefits system.
- Promoting self employment.
- Encouraging employers to see the business case.
- Transport to get to work.
- Addressing barriers where people live.
- Better support for the most excluding adults with learning disabilities.
- People with learning disabilities and their families leading the way.
- Better data and performance management - The Government will publish targets and milestones for this strategy in 2010.

6.0 NYCC Development Issues

- 6.1 Refocus funding from day service modernisation plans to supported employment, with consideration of how the current investment in Supported Employment can be used more effectively alongside savings from day services to deliver more jobs for people with learning disabilities. For families and carers secure in seeing sons or daughters in traditional day care how do we best help them understand a different future? The individual and the families need to commit to this process.
- 6.2 There will be a need to take into account the overall strategy that has been considered within Adult and Community Services on learning disabilities. The approach to Valuing Employment Now will affect the nature of jobs and restructuring proposed. A good deal of current employment is directed towards residential care, a different structure for future provision will be needed. Job coaching needs to be consistent, of a high standard and monitored. External providers will

need to be supported to deliver this alongside NYCC staff. This will require officers to think differently.

- 6.3 To what extent are we communicating the Strategy in terms of changing from day-centres to employment opportunities and what is the role of members within that?
- 6.4 The 'sister' document to Valuing Employment Now is called 'Valued in Public'. The strong message for us is that local authorities, particularly those that have adult social services responsibilities, are to be exemplar authorities. We need to think carefully and creatively about how we achieve that.
- 6.5 The Local Authority needs to become exemplar employers of people with learning disabilities(ACS have set a target of 2 people with learning disabilities to be employed per establishment)- however further work needs to be undertaken with recruiting managers and Human resources across the authority- such as:
- All vacancies in first instance are directed to NYCC SES – to see if appropriate job matches can be made.
 - All vacancies to be considered by recruiting line manager for job carving or task trading.
 - All recruiting line managers and ASO to have training on issues relating to recruiting, selection and induction of disabled people.
 - All establishments/teams to have a “diversity/disability” champion (not necessarily the line manager) who will support and advise managers on issues such as “reasonable adjustments”/buddying, reducing workforce discrimination, back to work action plans.
 - Occupational Health Services – should be required to look at issues of ill-treatment of disabled workers and support managers and person to reach solutions.
- 6.6 Getting a job should be a priority in the person centred support plans of everyone of a working age and encourage use of personal budgets to support this.
- 6.7 What approach has been taken within the school environment, are we offering different work experiences and the same opportunities?
- 6.8 Ensure Commissioners use their responsibility for 16-19 learning to ensure that courses for people with learning disabilities are focused on employment outcomes and to commission supported employment.

- 6.9 Commissioners should build an expectation of work for adults with learning disabilities into contracts for providers of support, so that they see their key role in encouraging people to think about work and get the advice they need, and helping them to move nearer to the labour market. Research shows that work experiences are not turning to paid jobs, do we rethink how we fund/support providers to provide on the job training and coaching
- 6.10 Ensure Common Assessment Frameworks for adults enable information sharing to support individual employment plans.
- 6.11 Good welfare rights advice for people with learning disabilities and their families as a key part of Supported Employment Services.
- 6.12 Links made between homes and jobs for people with learning disabilities for example by using employment options in strategies to reduce use of residential care (where applicable).
- 6.13 Ensure SES are accessible to support the most excluded adults with learning disabilities, i.e. people with complex needs, autism, mental health conditions, minority ethnic and newly arrived communities and ex-offenders. How do we do this? What would be the impact on current provision and with what resources?
- 6.14 Collation of data to enable target setting of getting people with learning disabilities into work. Data to also gather information on ethnicity, age and gender of people with learning disabilities and other impairment groups.
- 6.15 Links to be made between DWP/Job centre Plus, DEAs and SES on countywide basis, with the formation of a formal partnership/agreement.
- 6.16 Do we need to identify who will lead on this work? Do we have a lead for VEN/VIP on an operational and strategic level within NYCC?
- 6.17 Contracting and Procurement: how are we using our influence and power as a procuring organisation to lever businesses to think about doing something for people with learning disabilities?
- 6.18 To what extent do we widen the key recommendations to include all disabled adults?

7.0 Next Steps

- 7.1 The Task Group is now beginning to consider what information it needs to understand better the nature and scale of service change in the community that could result from VEN.

- 7.2 In relation to changes that can be made to develop North Yorkshire County Council as an exemplar authority, discussions are underway about holding a workshop at County Hall delivered by Inclusion North with examples and briefings from an authority that has been extremely successful in improving the percentage of people with learning disabilities in its employ.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1 The Committee is asked to note the work undertaken so far by the Task Group and confirm that it shares the emerging conclusions and that Task Group's view of what further work is required.

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26 January 2010

Background Documents: None