

**Scottish Commission for Learning Disability
Employment Task Group 24 August 2017 Baird A&B**



**Scottish Government Atlantic
Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU Tel 0300 244 6888**

In attendance:

Jim McCormick (Chair), Maura Lynch, Karen Murray, Michelle Fisher, Pauline MacDonald, Darren Tierney, Dr Jeanette Hägerström-Woolfson, Andrew Stewart, Jamie Rutherford, Andy Foreman, Michelle Fisher, Ivan Cohen, Caroline Kingston, Ruth Boyle, Pauline Graham, Norma Curran, Lorraine Scott, Mary Berrill, Jackie Galbraith, Shirley Cuzen, Amanda Currie, Chris Maguire

Apologies

Pamela Smith, Viv Sawers, Fiona Burns, Rachel Le Noan, Tricia Rainey, Helen Tomlinson, Ian Tasker

Welcome and introductions

Jim McCormick noted that the makeup of the group had changed slightly since it began and kept the group up-to-date with following information on members who have left the group: Ian Tasker has left his position at STUC and as such has left the Employment Task Group and Helen Tomlinson has left the DWP and similarly has left the Employment Task Group. And members who have since joined the group: Jackie Galbraith (Ayrshire College) and Shirley Cuzen (DWP), who is replacing Helen Tomlinson. Maura Lynch (SCLD) gave a brief overview of what the aim of the Task Group is and the history of the Task group for the new members.

Jim McCormick asked members to split up into small groups and discuss what had changed since the Task Group had started. The following feedback was given:

- Transitions from school to college and then to work are still poor
- Universal Credit seems like it might not incentivise work and we have to make sure we learn from UK wide social security mistakes
- We still need to raise awareness of Access to Work; this is true for both employers and people looking for work
- Data gathering has improved at a national level but it does not get disseminated at a local level; this can hamstring policy intentions
- We have a good opportunity with Fair Start Scotland. Fair Start should ensure that every local authority has a supported employment service. The biggest

employers are local authorities, Scottish Government and the NHS, we need to make sure Fair Start move people into these organisations

- The example of the See Me campaign used to highlight mental health issues was used a positive example of something that could be done to raise awareness for learning disability. Scottish Government stated that there was a small campaign about disability employment rolled out during the summer. Information about this campaign can be found here:

<http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/key-clients/disabled-people>

- DWP offered the group a summary of the work it is undertaking locally.

Jim McCormick introduced the presenters: Michelle Fisher (Inclusion Scotland) and Karen Murray (Skills Development Scotland).

We Can Work Internships for Disabled People in Scotland (Michelle Fisher)

Michelle outlined the remit of Inclusion Scotland and their commitment to give disabled people access to politics, public life and employment. As part of this commitment Inclusion Scotland have offered internships from 2014 in the public sector, the third sector and Scottish Parliament. Additionally the organisation has supported forty people to stand for Elected Office; sixteen of those people were successfully elected.

Inclusion Scotland have had over 100 internship opportunities for disabled people since 2014 and unlike many other internships Inclusion Scotland internships are paid at a Living Wage Rate. They offer up to 455 hours of salary, national insurance and pension costs to employers to host an accessible opportunity. There is no age limit to who they support, they support people with a wide range of disabilities and they support people across Scotland, but they are generally concentrated in the Central Belt.

The outcomes for disabled people include: increased awareness of Access to Work; increased confidence in the workplace; increased confidence in applying for jobs and going to interviews; paid work experience on their CV; professional and social networking; and experience of planning and working on a project.

The outcomes for employers include: increased awareness of Access to Work and the Right to reasonable adjustments; learning about making recruitment more accessible (giving questions in advance, having accurate job descriptions); and increased diversity in their workforce and all the benefits that come from this.

The challenges for Inclusion Scotland are: the general lack of awareness of Access to Work and reasonable adjustments; potential applicants ruling themselves out (many disabled people might not identify as being disabled); the issue of many

employers who are open to hosting an intern already being quite inclusive, so how do they reach employers who could be less inclusive.

The next steps for Inclusion Scotland are: set up programmes with Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government and continue public and voluntary sector work; seek additional funding to expand the programme; and explore approaches to offering services to the private sector (this would not include the salaries but would include support and recruitment help).

Improving Modern Apprenticeship Outcomes for young people with learning disabilities (Karen Murray)

Karen Murray outlined SDS progress on meeting the Task Group recommendations. In 2016-17 8.6% (2,178) of all MA starts self-declared as having a disability, which is a 120.5% increase on the previous year. Of these 2,178 starts, 50.4% of self identified as having a learning difficulty. There is still work to do in disaggregating learning disability from the disability stats.

Karen then discussed the SDS Equality Regional Partnership Pipeline, which details from Early Years and Primary School to Secondary School to Post-school Transition and finally to Sustained Employment/Activity. They have a priorities to improve achievement rates for people with disabilities and to increase starts from people with learning disabilities.

They have a regional approach going forward which aims to build on the existing strategy: working with regional partners (schools, local authorities, DYW groups, colleges and local equality partners). This regional approach is managed by the regional team, which has staff, known as Regional Assistants, whose remit covers a small number of local authorities. This regional approach allows for SDS to “hide the wiring” of the system from the MAs.

SDS commissioned research that examined the delivery of Core Skills within MAs for those individuals with learning disabilities. The following recommendations came from the report.

Recommendations for SDS

- SDS should offer awareness raising on a regular basis to training providers and employers relating to not just disability in general but specifically related to learning disabilities
- SDS should actively encourage large employers to initially ring fence places for MAs with learning disabilities
- SDS should consider highlighting signposting documents for the various MA Frameworks on the SDS website and bring their existence to the notice of all contracted training providers
- SDS, in partnership with SQA and others, should consider how statistics pertaining to disclosed disabilities of MAs can be further broken down within legislative restrictions to help current understanding of the level of

participation and completion of people with learning disabilities and to inform future planning.

Recommendations for Scottish Government

- Scottish Government should consider longer term funding of specific programmes which support potential Modern Apprentices who have learning disabilities from pre- interview stage to MA completion
- Scottish Government should consider how they can best provide funding for Modern Apprenticeships for those with learning disabilities which supports training providers and employers who incur additional costs, not retrievable through Access to Work, due to additional staffing requirements put in place to support the Modern Apprentice.

Specific progress against TERU recommendations

Collect and report learning disability data.

SDS Progress (August 17):

SDS has published disaggregated data for the first time and they will continue to refine, improve the guidance and analyse the breakdown of this.

Embed learning disability good practice in its contracted provision.

SDS Progress (August 17):

SDS has CPD, SERI and Open Doors consortium in-work support funding and enhanced contribution rates.

Set higher targets for providers working with people with a learning disability.

SDS Progress (August 17):

SDS have embedded KPIs into their contract obligations. They will monitor long term outcomes and proactively support positive action regarding learning disability.

Establish more effective joined-up employment pathways for people with learning disabilities.

SDS Progress (August 17):

SDS have thirty-two regional ASN guides and their Regional Equality Team are embedding regional approaches.

Double employment outcome rates for people with learning disabilities.

SDS Progress (August 17):

SDS have set up Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Group employer equality group. They have also had a disability marketing campaign. They will continue to focus on in-work support.

Secure additional resources and funding for learning disability employability services.

SDS Progress (August 17):

SDS have been signposting Access to Work. They have been promoting in-work support, enhanced contribution rates and the ASN discretionary fund.

Comments from the group

Jackie Galbraith pointed out that Ayrshire College had already adapted their Core Skills delivery and contextualised the delivery to align it with the appropriate course. Jim McCormick stated that the progress against the recommendations is very promising. Furthermore he stated that the Regional Assistants who 'hide the wiring' of the system are very important. We still need more information on why some people leave and some people stay on as MAs.

Work Plan Priorities

Scottish Government stated that they will capture data on outcomes on their programmes including Fair Start Scotland..

Scottish Government stated that they will seek to reduce the employment gap in disability; halving it will take some time but they are committed to it. Jim McCormick suggested that any target date should be consistent with other Scottish Government ambitions e.g. targets to reduce child poverty and pledges within the Fairer Scotland Action Plan.

Pamela Smith, on behalf of SLAED and the Task Group, has put together a supported employment proposal, which looks particularly at the Apprenticeship Levy. The proposal is looking at ring-fencing approximately 5% of the total levy for people with learning disabilities. This proposal will be taken to the appropriate COSLA committee.

Ayrshire College has been working with children and young people in SEN schools the year before they go to college to ensure they are settled by the time they start.

Closing remarks and date of next meeting

The Chair, Jim McCormick, thanked the members for their attendance and contribution to the third meeting of the Employment Task Group.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 23rd November 2017. The focus of that meeting shall be on the recommendations for Education. Ayrshire College have offered to host the meeting.

Progress Report

Recommendations for All Learning Disabilities Partners – Scottish Government, Local Authorities, SDS, Colleges and Employability Services

Substantially improve recording and reporting of learning disabilities data.

Scottish Government Progress (May 17):

Fair Start Scotland will collect comprehensive disability data and be supported by robust evaluation.

Recommendations for Scottish Government

Give greater priority to employability and employment of people with a learning disability. Renewed promotion of the Supported Employment Framework.

Scottish Government Progress (May 17):

New devolved employability programmes will seek to reduce the employment gap for people with a learning disability.

Providers of new employment services will be required to offer supported employment services.

Project SEARCH will be promoted through new learning and skills provision.

A Learning Disability Employment Programme will be delivered by NHS Scotland in 2017 supporting NHS Health Boards to increase the number of employees with a learning disability.

The Supported Employment Framework is a commitment in the Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Deliver Plan to 2021. Scottish Government will look at other options including the PDA for supported employment as one of the tools to improve the delivery of supported employment.

Progress Report

Set Scotland's employers the target of 4% of employees to be people with a learning disability.

Scottish Government Progress (May 17):

Further consideration required before a target could be agreed. Scottish Government is keen to look at the options available to improve the national position.

Recommendations for Local Authorities

Develop directories of employability services for people with a learning disability.

Establish supported employment services in all Local Authority areas.

SLAED Progress (August 17):

A supported employment proposal, which looks particularly at the Apprenticeship Levy, was taken to COSLA. The proposal is looking at ringfencing approximately 5% of the total levy for learning disability.

Recommendations for Skills Development Scotland

Collect and report learning disability data. Embed learning disability good practice in its contracted provision.

SDS Progress (August 17):

SDS has published disaggregated data for the first time and they will continue to refine, improve the guidance and analyse the breakdown of this.

SDS has CPD, SERI and Open Doors consortium in-work support funding and enhanced contribution rates.

Set higher targets for providers working with people with a learning disability.

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Establish more effective joined-up employment pathways for people with learning disabilities.

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Secure additional resources and funding for learning disability employability services.

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SDS have been signposting Access to Work. They have been promoting inwork support, enhanced contribution rates and the ASN discretionary fund.

**Recommendations for Scottish Funding Council and Scotland's Colleges
Greater focus on progression into real, sustainable employment.**

Ayrshire College (Aug 17):

Further consideration required before a target could be agreed. Scottish Government is keen to look at the options available to improve the national position.

Recommendations for SCLD

Continue to raise the profile and promote learning disability employment and employability.

SCLD Progress (May 17):

SCLD has committed to an annual "Learning Disability Week" and a national "Learning Disability Awards" event to 2020.

SCLD is looking at a national campaign to promote successful people with a learning disability linked to these events.

Continue to raise the profile and promote learning disability employment and employability.

Scottish Government Progress (May 17):

Promote broader cultural change working beyond planned government programmes activity.

Scottish Government will run an employment and disability campaign: raising awareness, promoting culture change and employer buy in.

Develop an agreed definition of 'Learning Disabilities'.

SCLD Progress (May 17) :

A national consultation exercise has been undertaken with People First Scotland with the aim of having an agreed national definition of "Learning Disabilities" by 2018.

Recommendations for Employers

Increased employer commitment to recruiting people with a learning disability.

Scottish Government Progress (May 17):

Commitment to work with employers to support a greater proportion of people with a learning disability into work.