Scottish Commission for Learning Disability
Employment Task Group

11 May 2017

Employment and Training Unit
Falkirk Chambers
Grangemouth Municipal Chambers,
Bo'ness Road
Grangemouth
FK3 8AH Tel 01324 504446

In attendance

Jim McCormick (Chair), Maura Lynch, Pauline MacDonald, Darren Tierney, Pamela Smith, Danny Logue, Julie Bilotti, Karen Murray, Andy Foreman, Ashley Ryan, Fiona Burns, Michelle Fisher, Ivan Cohen, Rhona Neill, Pauline Graham, Norma Curran, Lorraine Scott, Rachel Le Noan, Ruth Boyle, Chris Maguire

Welcome and introductions

Jim McCormick introduced the panel members: Pamela Smith (Falkirk Council/SLAED), Danny Logue (Skills Development Scotland) and Julie Bilotti (Scottish Government).

Jim noted that the employability landscape had changed since the Task Group last met in February, most noticeably with regards to the Council Elections. He opened up the floor for members to bring the Task Group up-to-date on any changes they had encountered. The activity around Fair Start Scotland and the opportunities within the new Social Security powers were mentioned by members.

The Falkirk Approach to Supported Employment (Pamela Smith)

Pamela Smith outlined the approach that Falkirk Council had taken to tackle youth unemployment in the area. The Council has been consistent in its approach over the last twelve years, which has allowed it to gather trend information.

There has been a policy commitment from Falkirk Council that 5% of its workforce would come from young people on Modern Apprenticeships, this equates to 300 members of staff. It used league tables for departments within the Council and then reported on these figures to the Corporate Management Team.

In 2005 the Council had ninety-eight apprentices and it took the Council five years in total to reach their 5% target. However, by 2016 it had 586 apprentices working in Falkirk Council.

Pamela has suggested that Falkirk Council may now want to focus on increasing the employment rate of people with learning disabilities; aiming to set sub-targets within their 5% target that should allow more people with learning disabilities into jobs at the Council. Pamela noted that there was an issue surrounding the definition of learning disability in setting their sub-target.

Careers Information & Advice Guidance (Danny Logue)

Danny explained the SDS Careers Information & Advice Guidance (CIAG) services for young people with a learning disability. The CIAG is based upon four key themes:

Capacity building – There are over 1,400 staff working for SDS who can offer support to build capacity through continuous professional development and *My Career Plan*: which looks at the whole development of self-management and the importance of transitions.

Equality in service development - SDS now work in primary schools and help to build capacity of teachers and carers and this helps to focus on early interventions. SDS has a policy responsibility to work with people with learning disabilities up to the age of 26. Furthermore, there are new resources for *My World of Work.*

Broadening horizons – The key issue here for SDS is focussing on abilities and making sure all organisations are working towards the same end. SDS has started parental engagement at the S2/S3 level in school as this is a pivotal moment for looking at future life choices. Also, it is important to look at Foundation Apprenticeships and how to make the curriculum more linked to the needs of industry.

Networking & partnership working – SDS is involved in strategic partnership working with the Equality Advisory Group and local partnership working with Local ASN Resource Guides.

SCLD Learning Disability Employment Task Group (Julie Bilotti)

Julie explained the Delivery Plan for A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People. One of the ambitions of the plan was to reduce, by at least half, the employment gap between disabled people and the rest of the population.

The Scottish Government recognise the success that Project SEARCH has achieved in employment outcomes and they seek to explore opportunities to promote this model as they develop plans for greater alignment of learning and skills provision.

A Learning Disability Employment Programme will be delivered by NHS Scotland to support Health Boards to increase the number of people with learning disabilities that they employ. Additionally, Scottish Government will continue to promote the Supported Employment Framework and is committed to running an employment and disability campaign that will focus on awareness, culture change and employer buy-in.

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

Fairer Scotland's commitment to promote Project SEARCH and the NHS Learning Disability Employment Programme are a start to meeting this recommendation. Julie believes that we are presently pushing at an open door with regards to disability employment and that the Scottish Government can do more than the recommendations in Fairer Scotland.

This is also a commitment in Fairer Scotland and in Fair Start Scotland that requires Supported Employment to be available.

Scottish Government feel that there is not currently enough strength in the figures behind the 4% target. The figure aside, they are keen to consider how to support a much greater proportion of people with a learning disability into work. They feel there is a huge amount of learning from the work that Pamela Smith is doing and the ministers are very supportive of this work.

Reflections from members

- There is work to be done in ascertaining where local authorities stand with the Apprenticeship Levy. Is it possible to use these funds more effectively?
- We need to look at potentially changing the job descriptions of entry level jobs, as has been achieved successfully by Project SEARCH in NHS Lanarkshire.
- The Task Group needs to create a Work Plan. This will show the real, tangible actions that the group can achieve. How can we get better data? Or a better supported employment model? The Task Group should have work streams for this.
- We need to try and take a national approach to this work. We are aware there are issues with Transitions and Education but we need to start addressing these issues.
- We need to get stronger learning disability data on education and employment.
- Maura Lynch confirmed that SCLD and People First are in the process of consulting on the definition of learning disability.

Closing remarks and date of next meeting

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

The next meeting will take place in August 2017, the date and venue to be confirmed.

Progress Report – May 2017

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:**
>
> Fairer 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:**
>
> 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 – May 2017

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

Scottish Government Progress:

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.

Recommendations for Skills Development Scotland

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

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

Recommendations for Scottish Funding Council and Scotland's Colleges

Greater focus on progression into real, sustainable employment.

Recommendations for SCLD

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

SCLD Progress:

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.

Progress Report – May 2017

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

Scottish Government Progress:

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 :

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:

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