

BRIEFING NOTE

Agenda Item No. 8

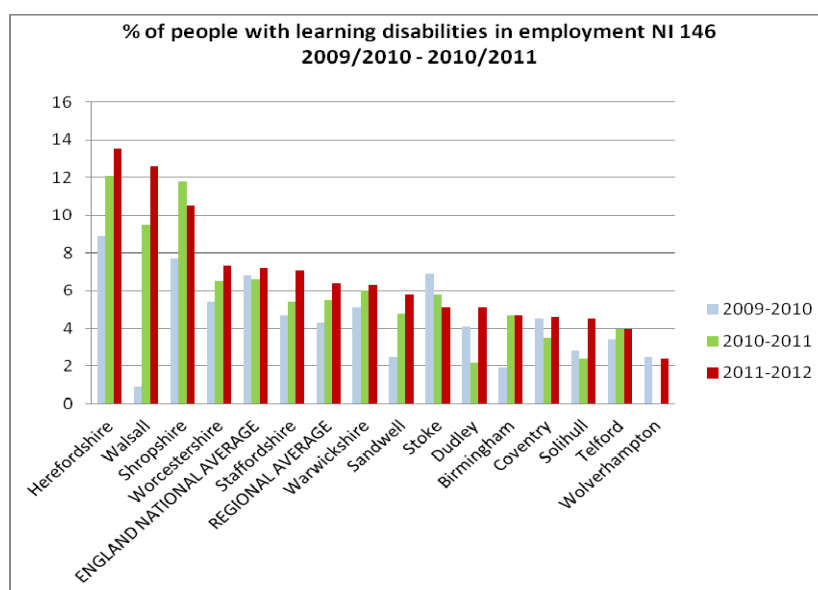
TO: Social Care Scrutiny Panel
DATE: 18 April 2013

RE: EMPLOYMENT OF ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Purpose

To provide scrutiny with an update on the progress in developing services to improve our performance in supporting adults with learning disabilities into paid work.

NI 146 Performance



The graph above shows Walsall's improvement from poorest to second best across the midlands authorities between 2009 and end of March 2012. Walsall remains well above the national and regional averages. While we await publication of 2012/2013 figures which are expected to show a reduction across the region due to the current economic climate, Walsall is expected to perform well and remain in a high position possibly still second.

Recruitability Plus – Public Sector Placements and Employment

Recruitability Plus provides paid work placements with the placement funded jointly by Social care and the Council placement provider. This provides up to 600 placement hours each year, giving up to 60 people a 6 month placement. This has not led to as many paid employment opportunities as hoped for, but the scheme has provided a range of outcomes to move individuals nearer to paid employment and/or further education. This will be developed further in 2013/14 with placements with health Trusts to broaden scope of public sector opportunities.

Mencap Scheme – Supported Employment, Placements and Job Coaching – Private Sector

A successful project with Remploy and Landau provided job coaching to support people into paid work within the private sector. Unfortunately that funding ran out at the end of March 2013. A recent research report by the NDTi recommends that Job Coaching is developed in all areas as it has been shown to be the most effective mechanism to enable people into paid work. Funding will need to be released from in-house services to allow this to continue. Commissioners will be looking at this in line with the redevelopment of Links to Work.

For those who are not, 'job ready' and require more support, Walsall has now successfully commissioned a pilot through Mencap based on their national modular scheme, 'Employ Me'. This will build on the successful Black Country pilot that Walsall initiated using the same scheme. The scheme will provide its first year update in September 2013.

Coordinated Database – Adults supported in paid employment and reviewed

All employment activity requires a coordinated database and this project was completed successfully and this is now delivered as part of the menu of services from Links to Work.

Social Firms and Enterprise

Entering paid work through self employment and/or micro-enterprise was to be developed through community catalysts. For a number of reasons this has not been successful and will need to develop during 2013/14.

Further developments in 2013/14

The following will form the components of an employment strategy in 2013/14, to complement the above. The strategy is underpinned by an Employment Pathway which will be managed by a Walsall Disability Employment Partnership with membership from all key stakeholders and agencies. Due to a number of organisational changes and temporary arrangements there has been a degree of inertia in 2012/13 that will be recovered in the coming year:

- Employment Pathway
- Independent Travel Training
- Adult Education – Colleges/Lifeline learning
- Transition – 'Getting a Life' employment pathway
- Accreditation of Job Coaching
- Self Employment/Micro Enterprise
- Volunteering/Community Links
- Awareness/Information sharing
- Benefits advice
- Consultation and Engagement
- Redevelopment of Links to Work

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