

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT UPDATE REPORT
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 20 DECEMBER 2001	Ref: GMcI/JJ	

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 To update the Social Work Committee on a number of issues relating to the Department's Supported Employment Operation.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Supported Employment Operation was launched by the Social Work Department in January 1999. Since the launch of the initiative there have been several progress reports to Committee. This report provides additional information on current developments.
- 2.2 The Supported Employment model in North Lanarkshire is based on a number of fundamental principles. Service users undergo an extensive vocational profiling exercise, which identifies the individuals', skills, abilities and preferences. When employment opportunities are accessed the Department's Job Coaches provide on-the-job support until such time as the service user and the employer are satisfied that the individual can perform the duties of the job.
- 2.3 A further principle relates to the range and type of jobs which are considered suitable, they have to be real jobs which pay the appropriate salary for the work undertaken. Additionally, the service user has to be able to sustain employment in the longer term. The latter objective is met through the identification of suitable work and on-the-job training and support. Experience has shown that the model adopted by North Lanarkshire Council is much more successful than the traditional pre-vocational training approach. It is apparent that on-the-job training and support achieves a more successful and sustainable outcome.
- 2.4 Currently 111 service users are engaged in the Supported Employment Operation, 46 people are in work 34 of the jobs concerned are in the private sector, 12 are employed in the public sector. Job searching is ongoing for a further 44 service users, profiling work is underway with 21 service users. A recent survey of the jobs which has been accessed indicated that the average hours worked was 27 per week. Almost every service user who has found work is financially better off than they were when receiving social security benefits.

### 3 PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

#### Workstep

- 3.1 Earlier this year the Department of Works and Pensions introduced the Workstep Programme. This replaces the former Supported Employment Scheme. The Workstep Programme has been designed to enhance the number of people with disabilities going into employment and to assist individuals who are in sheltered employment to progress to open employment. As part of the new programme the Employment Service propose to invest £10 million in developing an additional 2,000 Workstep contract places on a national basis.
- 3.2 The 2,000 Workstep places will be awarded on a contract basis. Those organisations who are successful in bidding for these additional places, will be paid monies in respect of Action Plans, Job Access, Job Support and Job Progression. The Social Work Department have submitted an expression of interest for 40 places on the new programme. In the first instance all applications submitted will be examined to ensure that they meet the Workstep Programme requirements. Those organisations who satisfy the criteria will be invited to submit a more detailed application early in the New Year. If successful in this application, the Department, subject to Committee approval, would intend to use the income from the contract to develop additional Job Coaching posts, to further expand the North Lanarkshire Supported Employment Operation.

#### **Joseph Rowntree Foundation/The Policy Consortium for Supported Employment**

- 3.3 The North Lanarkshire Supported Employment Operation continues to attract attention and recognition for the successes, which are being achieved in this important area of work. The Social Work Department has recently been approached by representatives of the above organisations with a proposal to host a major seminar in North Lanarkshire. The proposed event will promote the concept of Supported Employment and the key role, which this policy has in tackling social inclusion. Discussions on this approach are in the early stages of development. Should they come to fruition, the event will attract key policy makers in the area of Supported Employment. The Council will attract financial support in the region of £4,700 to help meet the cost of the seminar (a copy of the outline proposal is available in the Members Library). This item will be reported in detail to a future meeting of the Social Work Committee.

#### **North Lanarkshire Council Supported Employment Placement Scheme**

- 3.4 At the August meeting the Social Work Committee approved a report which introduced a Supported Employment Placement Scheme. This will increase the opportunities of disabled people gaining employment with the Council. As part of this proposal, additional Job Coaches are required to implement the plan. The recruitment process is almost complete, therefore it is anticipated the scheme will be fully launched early in the New Year.

### 4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Presently there are no policy considerations, however if the application for the Workstep Contract is successful, a detailed report will be submitted to Committee outlining all policy considerations. Similar action will be taken in respect of the Supported Employment event proposed by the Rowntree Foundation.

## **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 Committee is requested to note the terms of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Dickie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2001**

*For further information on this report please contact George McNally, Manager Social Work Strategy  
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Disabilities, which is expected to make significant reference to the place of supported open employment in reducing the social exclusion experienced by large numbers of people with learning difficulties. The seminar confirmed the importance of this aspect of the Foundation's work.

The costs of the launch event, combined with the costs of editing and producing the Framework report and the Plain Facts have used up the ring-fenced funds available to the project under "Publication and Dissemination". This proposal is a request for additional resources to continue the dissemination and related development work.

## **Aims**

1. To continue to disseminate "A Framework for Supported Employment" and the related *Foundations*, with a view to engaging those who are not yet 'on board' with the messages; to 'passing the baton' on where possible; and to pursuing some of the specific recommendations made.
2. To continue dialogues already started with key players to influence policy developments in this area, and to initiate new dialogues where these are required.

## **Methods**

There are three strands to this proposal. First, it is proposed to fund a series of six events across the UK through which to engage audiences operating at regional and local levels. Second, it is proposed to resource members of the Policy Consortium to continue in their role of policy development around the Framework's recommendations. Third, funds are sought to co-ordinate the different activities and people involved.

## **Outline of activities and costs**

The following activities and costs have been developed through initial conversations with members of the Policy Consortium and NDT, following round-table discussions held at the launch event. The launch event produced several additional areas for possible future work. Some of these may be developed into a proposal for a future meeting.

## 1. INFLUENCING PRACTICE THROUGH REGIONAL/NATIONAL EVENTS

People attending the launch event suggested that a series of events to engage people outside central government could be very useful in disseminating the Framework recommendations and promoting a better understanding of the potential and practice of supported employment.

Each event would take the Framework document as the foundation, but would be carefully tailored to maximise impact, depending on the region or country. For example, a major focus of the 3 regional events planned for England might be on Welfare To Work Joint Investment Plans (JIPs): e.g. how supported employment could play a bigger part in achieving the successful implementation of existing JIPs; how future JIPs might better incorporate supported employment. The content would be different again in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For example, in Scotland the focus might be the place of supported employment in the context of Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs), the recent review of services for people with learning difficulties, and the Scottish Executive's interest in increasing work opportunities for disabled people (e.g. launch of "Workability Scotland").

To enable this to happen, each event would require additional resources for preparation, including opportunities to speak and meet with relevant players from the area. The process of consulting on the Framework also means that members of the Policy Consortium are in touch with a range of innovators in the field and are in a position to identify relevant people from each region to support and contribute to the events, as required.

The six events will be facilitated by Anne O'Bryan (Lead Participant), a leading member of the Policy Consortium, who will bring a national perspective and provide a link between the events.

The overall organisation and administration of the events would be undertaken by the NDT (National Development Team) which has hosted the Policy Consortium for Supported Employment. Significantly, each event would be co-hosted with relevant partners, depending on the area. This should help to increase regional/national ownership of the agenda. Probable partners would be: NIUSE (Northern Irish Union of Supported Employment); SUSE (Scottish Union of Supported Employment); Welsh

Association of Supported Employment Agencies; and AfSE (Association for Supported Employment in England). Very good links have already been built with NIUSE, SUSE and Welsh ASEA; better links with AfSE are currently being developed.

#### *OVERALL OBJECTIVES*

- Disseminate the key messages identified in the Framework
- Encourage and enable an understanding of and commitment to the Framework at a regional level
- Provide an arena for sharing local experience and lessons
- Provide focused events as a catalyst for the development of regional networks to:
  - Take forward the themes and conclusions of the Framework
  - Identify and promote best practice
  - Offer mutual support
  - Raise the profile of supported employment at a local level
- Encourage and facilitate a dialogue between supported employment users, providers and purchasers
- Encourage and enable an understanding of and commitment to supported employment within local planning processes

#### *PARTICIPANTS*

To support the intention that the workshops enable real dialogue and development, the number of people attending each day will be limited to 50. Participation will be by invitation and will include:

- People with experience of using supported employment
- Supported employment services
- Local planners and purchasers
- Self advocates and representatives of disabled people's organisations
- Organisations whose support encourages supported employment, such as benefit agencies and advisors
- Regional champions
- Elected Members

Participants would be required to pay £45 each towards the cost of venue and lunch. Participation would be free to self-advocates and disabled people who would otherwise be unable to attend. The maximum number of participants at each would be 50 people, including 10 places reserved for self-advocates/disabled people.

### *WORKSHOP CONTENT*

- Introduction to the Framework for Supported Employment
- Overview of supported employment in the region/country
- Experience of offering supported employment in the region/country
- Purchaser/planner perspective
- Group Work on implementing the Framework in the region/country
- Local action planning

### *COSTS PER EVENT:*

Venue and refreshments/lunch (50 participants @ £35)	1750
Additional venue equipment	100
Lead Participant	
Event daily fee	250
Planning days (four per workshop)	1000
Travel and accommodation expenses	500
Planning Partners/Consortium Members	
Planning days (five per workshop)	1250
Additional expenses incurred in planning stages	400
Telephone, stationary, post	100
Workshop materials	50
NDT administrative overheads (invitations etc)	300
Travel/accommodation – Facilitators/Speakers	300
Interpretation (x 2 plus expenses)	500
<b>Sub-total per event</b>	<b>6500</b>
Contribution from 40 participants @ £45 each	1800
Cost to the Foundation per event	4700
<b>Total for six events</b>	<b>£28,200</b>