

**Council:** 15 July 2008

**Administration Policy Item:** Cllr. Lynne Hillan

## **Barnet Plan for Jobs (Right 4 Work)**

### **Background**

Only 10% of economically active disabled people in the Borough are in work, through MENCAP research shows that 65% of people with learning difficulties nationally would like to be in paid work.

While employment rates for the physically disabled have generally improved, those for people with learning disabilities have remained static.

This means they are the most excluded group when it comes to securing employment.

Council believes that LBB must take action to ensure that more people from this disadvantaged group are able to secure work, which would help raise skills levels and confidence, as well as increasing the diversity of the workforce, making Barnet a leader in an area of Corporate Social Responsibility that very few employers have effectively embraced. In addition, it will reduce dependence upon Adult Social Services day services which for some people have traditionally been offered for people who could have worked.

### **Detail**

MENCAP has been working with Barnet with a view to providing increased opportunities under the WorkRight model. We are one of only 5 sites in the South East to be approached to enter into such a partnership. This partnership is funded by the Learning Disability Development Fund from the Department of Health.

A co-ordinator employed by MENCAP will work within LBB to identify suitable job vacancies, undertake job carving and match candidates to vacancies. This initiative will support the Council in achieving the Local Area Agreement target for people with a learning disability in paid employment (NI146).

In addition, the post holder will provide support to both the employee and managers on an ongoing basis and liaise with other employment groups in the Borough.

### **Recommendations**

Council accordingly:

- Supports the Employability Barnet initiative aiming to increase employment levels for disabled people known to Adult Social Services
- Supports LBB entering into a one-year partnership with MENCAP to increase employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities.
- Requests Cabinet produce a feasibility study, outlining the benefits that could accrue to both the clients of this project and the Council itself.