

## Notes from the Employment working group

### Sheffield Autism Partnership

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017

1. We noted that Universal Credit is not due to be rolled out in Sheffield until July 2018, rather than this month as had been originally understood.

2. We had discussion about the paper

#### **'Employment and Autistic Adults: On-line Resources (version2)**

We agreed that there needed to be coverage also of one or two resources which are also identified in the *Opportunity Sheffield* section of SCC website and RG agreed to make those changes.

It was noted that the Opportunity Sheffield section of the SCC website is found under '**Schools-childcare**' section of this website and that this seemed very inappropriate and not a place that most autistic adults would think of looking.

**It was agreed this should be raised at the APB meeting with a request that the location be moved.**

**It was agreed that the paper should go to the APB** and then be published on the SAS website.

3. During the discussion it was noted that there are continuing problems with obtaining Access to Work funding and that individuals were only entitled to 6 months of a job coach every 3 years – unsatisfactory for autistic adults.

This led to further discussion about the continuing lack of understanding about the need to maintain an external mentor/coach for many autistic adults in employment because of the nature of the difficulties they have in communicating with others, including managers.

4. There was brief discussion about positive moves to advertise jobs through Diversity Jobs.co.uk – which the SCC is promoting. However it was also noted that the ongoing problems with Recruitment Agencies remain, and **we agreed to ask SCC what they were doing about diversity, inclusion etc with Recruitment Agencies – to be raised at next APB.**
5. There was an update from the Autism Centre for Supported Employment about their progress in helping autistic adults into paid employment. This was positive, and we noted

that this organisation is currently working with 90 adults, and has 25 on its waiting list. It is also of course working with a significant number of employers in the region as well.

6. There was brief discussion about the position of Unions in relation to employment of autistic adults and young people and agreed it would be useful to have some contact here. It was also pointed out the one of the new Sheffield MPs is a disability campaigner and that he too may be able to add weight to the existing SCC campaign to improve the employment opportunities for disabled people generally
7. It was noted that the Pathways to Employment Booklet will be fully updated by the next meeting and will be available for circulation.
8. The group had some wider discussion about reaching hard to reach groups such as older people and how we can ensure parity of esteem between Autism and, 'mental health, dementia and learning difficulties' all of which appear to be separately identified and focussed upon. The group felt it would be helpful to have a diagram showing the different groups/boards/Partnerships etc that exist in Sheffield and what they cover. So for example, what aspects of services for vulnerable adults are covered by eg safeguarding partnership, inclusion board etc. **It was agreed to make this request at the APB.**
9. The final section of the meeting was devoted to considering the analysis of the survey and it was agreed that further work needed to be completed to pick up suggestions and issues and present them as items for the APB. **SJ agreed to convene a working meeting to do this.**
10. The next meeting is scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> September and a new group chair is being sought.