

2020-2030

Employment and Health Strategy



Making our place a
great place to work



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**



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Employment and Health Strategy

2020-2030

Forward

We have the ambition to enable everyone in Nottinghamshire to achieve their potential for a healthy and productive life. The connection between health and work is important – unemployment is bad for health and good work is good for health.

Part of supporting people to achieve their potential in life is looking at how schools and colleges play a role in work readiness, how to enable people to enter the job market and then maintain economic independence for themselves and their families, especially as they age.

This is especially important for individuals with long term conditions and disabilities where the difference in employment rate between disabled people and the general population is unacceptably large and misrepresents the large number of people in this group who want to work and live independent lives.

Creating pathways to good jobs requires partners from across the private, public and third sector to work together, especially for those who are living with long term conditions or disabilities. Nottinghamshire County Council aspires to provide leadership to bring these partners together and lead by example with our own workforce.

I have a mental health disability which I am very open about, and from the very start of my employment with Nottinghamshire County Council two and a half years ago I have received wonderful and pro-active support from both my supervisor and Team Manager. They took on board my need for regular supervision which included looking at how my work impacts on my mental health and vice versa. At two points of stress during my employment they arranged for me to have six sessions of counselling as a preventative measure under the Employee Counselling Scheme.

I have learnt how to manage my health much better over the years, and this, together with the support I have received, has meant that I have not needed any time off at all in relation to my disability during my time with the County Council so far.

I have recently been privileged to be selected to train as a Mental Health First Aider, so hopefully I can provide some support and assistance to others who struggle with mental health needs.

Introduction

Nottinghamshire County Council has a unique role within employment and health - as a system leader, one of the largest employers in the county, and a significant commissioner and provider of services.

We will leverage these roles to influence change to ensure we have the aspiration for every young person that they have the potential to lead a productive life, to enable more people to get into work where this is their goal and develop our workplaces to be settings that facilitate good health and wellbeing.

Economic and political leadership

We will seek opportunities to secure investment for Nottinghamshire to generate growth and through partnership ensure that growth delivers opportunity for people with long-term health conditions and disability.

As commissioners and deliverers of a significant volume of services, with direct and indirect impact on approximately 30,000 of the county's workforce, we will increase the uptake of Wellbeing at Work, and increase the opportunities for people through supported internship, apprenticeship, supported employment and a range of options to improve work readiness.

Knowledge of the local economy

We will build understanding of supply side challenges and local labour market information with our partners, and through membership of and joint work with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) drive economic development and regeneration to increase reach to work for disadvantaged groups.

Maximise existing responsibilities

Through the remit of the Health and Wellbeing Board, we will drive partnership action on place-based approaches to tackle the health drivers of worklessness.

Through Health and Wellbeing Board and strategic partnerships we will mobilise the system to focus on employment and encourage that provision and pathways are integrated where this adds value to the outcomes for our residents.

Through social care delivery for children, adults and families, create a culture where employment becomes an expectation for individuals and communities, and ensure investment in employment support is both evidence-based and fully utilised so support is available when it is needed, and current reach is increased.

There is a strong economic argument to addressing health-related worklessness, across public expenditure, the wider economy and personal and household income. It is estimated that when a claimant moves into a job paying the National Living Wage, there are savings of £6,900 for government, a £13,100 boost to the local economy, and £6,500 gain to the individual.



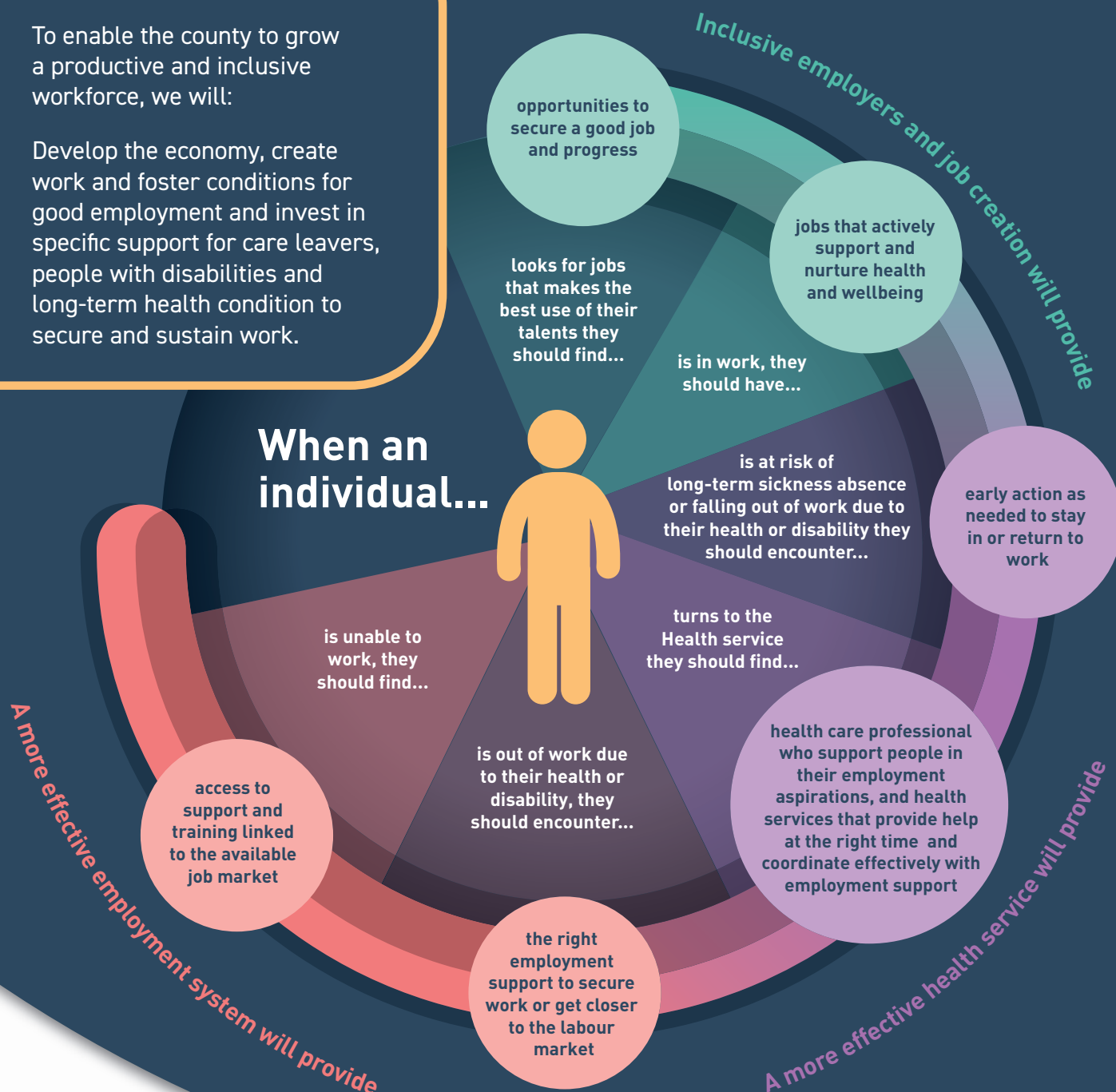
Nottinghamshire Employment and Health

Our vision

To enable the county to grow a productive and inclusive workforce, we will:

Develop the economy, create work and foster conditions for good employment and invest in specific support for care leavers, people with disabilities and long-term health condition to secure and sustain work.

When an individual...



Employment and Health in Nottinghamshire

Good work is generally good for both mental and physical health and at an individual and a collective level, work is one of the most fundamental and defining activities of humankind.

Good work is an enabler and impacts positively on quality of life, social interaction and identity. Within Nottinghamshire, significant numbers of people are experiencing worklessness due to poor health because of physical and mental health conditions.

Being in work can have a strong positive influence on health, protecting against social exclusion through providing an income, social interaction, a core role, identity and purpose.

With appropriate support, securing work is particularly important for individuals with a health condition or disability, not only because it promotes full participation in society and independence, but also because it can promote recovery and rehabilitation, and lead to improved health outcomes and a better quality of life.



The impact of long-term conditions on Nottinghamshire's residents

Work and long-term conditions

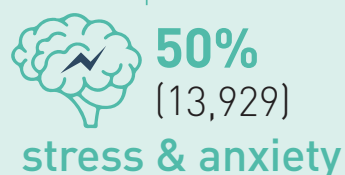


Source: PHE 2019, Carers UK 2019 & Department for Work and Pensions 2015

Nottinghamshire residents who have been unable to work due to an illness or disability for at least a year (Employment Support Allowance, ESA)



Of those, the main reason for their claim is:



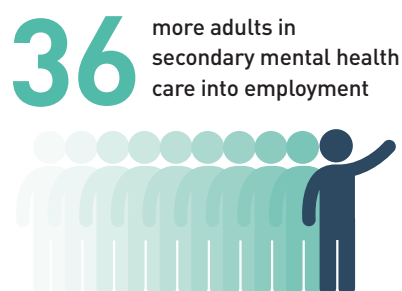
Source: DWP 2019

Health has a considerable impact on employment and prosperity in Nottinghamshire. Many of our residents are in work, with around 77% of all working age adults in Nottinghamshire in employment. The reality for people with disabilities and long-term conditions is significantly different. Employment for those with a long-term condition in Nottinghamshire is estimated at only 65.5%.

In Nottinghamshire 30,770 working age adults are claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) benefit due to having ill-health or a disability. Of this, more than 26,000 working age adults have been in receipt of ESA for more than 12 months. We know that the two main health conditions contributing to this are mental health and musculoskeletal health conditions such as back pain and arthritis. Areas in the north of the county, including Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Ashfield, experience the highest levels of health related worklessness.

In Nottinghamshire, people with mental health conditions fare worse than those across England; the English average for employment for this group is 7% but for Nottinghamshire only 4% of adults with mental health conditions are in work. In order to close the gap between the Nottinghamshire and English average we need to support 36 more adults with a mental health condition on a care plan approach into employment.

To close the gap between the Nottinghamshire and English average, we would need to support:



Source: ASCOF 2017/18

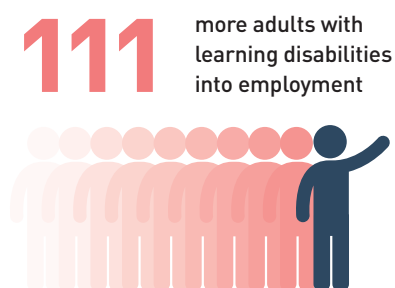
The impact of disability on Nottinghamshire's residents

Disabled people are significantly less likely to be in employment than non-disabled people. In 2015 nationally, 47.9% of working-age disabled people were in employment compared to 80.1% of working-age non-disabled people. Most disabled people are not born with a disability but acquire it during their lives. The prevalence of disability is strongly related to age; around 1 in 20 children are disabled compared with 1 in 5 working adults and 1 in 2 older people. Most impairments are not visible.

Disability affects a large proportion of our population. The number of 18-64-year olds predicted to have a serious physical disability in Nottinghamshire in 2017 was 11,903. Approximately one in ten adults in Nottinghamshire aged 18-64 live with moderate/severe physical disabilities. The numbers of people aged 18+ who are predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability and therefore likely to be in receipt of services was estimated at 3,145 in 2017.

Learning disability is a particular concern for Nottinghamshire, and it is unlikely that if you have a learning disability you will be in work as only 2.8% of adults with a learning disability who are in contact with social care have paid work.

In order to close the gap between the Nottinghamshire and English average for adults with learning disabilities, Nottinghamshire needs to support 111 more adults with learning disabilities into employment.



Source: ASCOF 2017/18

Getting the best start in life and being ready for work

Enabling the best start in life for the children and young people of Nottinghamshire requires a whole system and whole family approach to ensure young adults are ready for work and have access to extra support if and when this is needed.

We know that children are less likely to be in work and enjoy good work as adults when they have left care, had a special educational need or disability, or have a family where work is not a usual occupation.

Intergenerational worklessness

Family approaches are thought to be most effective to address intergenerational worklessness and an intensive approach is needed to aid work readiness and raise expectations that work is possible. Working in this way will involve addressing wider determinants of health such as disability and mental health, but also specific interventions to increase confidence and raise parental aspirations. These interventions are effective where exposure to working life is coupled with accessible, flexible and local opportunities for education, work experience and childcare. Life skills work is a crucial element to support a change in mindset as well as building the ability to get to appointments on time, to travel further than the local community, setting good routines, communication and literacy skills.

Looked after children and care leavers

Care leavers

In 2018 Nottinghamshire County Council were in contact with 348 care leavers aged 19, 20 or 21. Of these 44% were known to be in education, employment or training. This compares with 51% of care leavers in England. An updated snapshot from January 2020 shows the County Council in contact with 214 care leavers aged 19, 20 or 21, with 51% known to be in education, employment or training.



Nottinghamshire County Council were in contact with aged 19, 20 or 21 in 2018. Of these **44%** were known to be in education, employment or training. This compares with **51%** of care leavers in England.

Source: Department for Education 2019

For some of our looked after children, they have been in alternative education for some years and would struggle to access college or work after many years of being in an alternative setting. Some have very successful education and require very little ongoing support to gain work. Our ambition is that all care leavers have the opportunity for work at whatever point that happens in their education and training, and that work readiness has an increasing focus in their education.

Young people with Special Educational Needs or Disability

There are many children and young people in Nottinghamshire with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who do not have these formally described through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). We must ensure that the needs of this cohort are not overlooked and that pathways, such as traineeships, are available to support progression into work. We know that having a Special Educational Need or Disability increases the likelihood that the young person will not be in employment, education or training at age 18, and indeed is less likely to secure good work in the longer-term. That is why it is so important to work with educational partners to ensure that pathways to support seamless transitions from education to employment are available for more of our young people with, and without, EHCPs.

Paid employment should be the outcome for young people with SEND whenever possible and appropriate. We should not overlook or devalue the cohort for whom this may not be achievable but who have an equal right and expectation to be included in their communities and to make a meaningful contribution to society. It is crucial that within Nottinghamshire all people and professionals involved in the lives of Looked After Children or Children with SEND shape positive expectations that work is possible when considering the question - "what do you want to be when you grow up?".

There are currently 3,031 children and young people in Nottinghamshire with Education, Health and Care Plans of whom 686 are aged 16-18 and 458 aged 19 or over. These plans are key to setting the future ambition of young people for employment and the role of education in supporting that ambition. We will ensure that Preparation for Adulthood is formally addressed in all EHCP reviews from Year 9 onwards and employment aspirations are articulated where appropriate.

How will we do it

We will have four key areas of focus:



Inclusive growth

Despite high levels of employment there are still communities and places where unemployment and economic activity remains high with a growing number facing significant or multiple barriers to work. To increase overall prosperity, enjoy higher real wages and promote more opportunities for our residents to get on, we must raise our productivity.

Economic factors such as income and the quality of work are key to people's health. Inclusive Growth, ensuring economic growth benefits everyone, is a vital strand of work. An element of driving this forward is working with employers to have an increased understanding of their needs now and in the future in relation to supporting inclusive recruitment practices for those furthest away from the labour market.

Looking at this in practice means thinking about actions to boost job creation, at the same time as thinking about skills strategies that would improve basic skill levels and enable people to access jobs. It means thinking about interventions that can improve the quality of jobs at the same time as thinking about how people can be supported to progress in and sustain work. And it means thinking about where jobs are located at the same time as thinking about the costs of and ability to use public transport to get to those jobs.

County Council Commitment

To ensure the County Council is as effective as possible in enabling residents of all ages and skill levels to progress and move into more productive, better paid jobs in a transformed local economy. This requires the council to lead and facilitate discussions and actions to address the major challenges and barriers that are preventing our workforce and businesses from growth. We will support actions to:

- close the gap on average earnings - increasing the earnings (gender equality), qualification levels and progression rates for residents to ensure that they have access to opportunities
- close the unemployment gap - removing barriers which make it difficult for people to take up employment and training
- close the education and skills gap - making sure our young people have the skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications to take up quality training and jobs
- close the aspiration and ambition gap - so local people own their economic future and have high aspirations and confidence, with support to enable them to make good choices.



Actions

- Encourage employers to expand their search for talent to include those who might be excluded from traditional recruiting processes for a variety of reasons, despite possessing the skills employers require.
- Work with key stakeholders to provide practical insights into how places can understand local issues and develop shared priorities, capitalise on local assets and use available levers to develop enhance local economies.
- Build attitudes to work with employers to raise awareness of opportunities to widen workforce participation to currently underemployed groups.
- Through partnerships, including with universities and further education, create more opportunities for people to improve skills and work readiness increasing access to existing services.
- Use procurement within the Council to set expectations regarding the offer of apprenticeships, supported internships and disability confident status within the supply chain.
- Encourage employers to improve the quality of existing jobs through contract and creation of graduate level opportunities.
- Continue to support educational providers, particularly Further Education Colleges, to develop and deliver their offer in response to the skills gaps identified in the Industrial Strategy through clearly defined vocational talent pipelines operating from entry level through the full spectrum of apprenticeships to degree level qualifications.
- Increase supply and access to vocational alternatives to GCSE driven by the skills gap in the Industrial Strategy.
- Through the D2N2 Growth Hub and the Council's dedicated Business Advisers, encourage innovation and learning in relation to workplace health practice, especially in small and medium sized enterprises.
- Improve the coordination of interactions with employers between employer-facing council activities.
- Take learning from the Midlands Engine Mental Health and Productivity Pilot with a view to improving the skills and confidence of employers/managers to contribute to improved mental health and wellbeing.



Population health

The population health workstream collates evidence of the scale and nature of need in the Nottinghamshire population for support around employment and health. It will allow us to clearly understand the nature of barriers to employment in our four target groups, who is affected and what approaches are most effective in supporting these groups to secure or maintain employment.

The workstream will also extend our effectiveness and reach in creating new opportunities for employment support, by working with partner organisations to develop a strategic delivery framework. This will identify the roles, responsibilities, infrastructure and investment required to address the gaps in support to our target groups and achieve improvement in employment and health outcomes at scale. A focus will be work with NHS partners to strengthen the contribution of health services to the goal of work as a health outcome.

Support for health in the workplace will also be extended through the Wellbeing at Work programme, which is free and open to any organisation in Nottinghamshire that wishes to be recognised for their work to improve the health and wellbeing of their workforce. By addressing the most significant risk factors for ill-health and loss of independence, it enables employers to invest in their local communities whilst sustaining and improving the productivity of their own organisation.

It is equally important that Nottinghamshire has in place reliable and robust ways to measure the impact our services are having on employment and health outcomes. We will work with expert partners including Public Health England and the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop shared metrics for employment and health outcomes.



County Council Commitment

We will work with partners to ensure that:

- any person facing health or complex social barriers preventing them from working has access to expert advice and support to pursue their aspirations, and secure and maintain paid employment
- employers in Nottinghamshire prioritise the health of their workforce and invest in good health at work through the Wellbeing at Work scheme
- employment support offered in the county is outcomes focussed, joined up across sectors, and based on evidence, both of what residents need and what is most effective in addressing those needs.



Actions

- Develop a rapid health needs assessment and evidence review of effective employment support practice for long term conditions.
- Work with partners including the LEP to develop a strategic delivery framework for employment support, which identifies gaps and opportunities for more effective investment and joint working.
- Work with businesses and organisations in Nottinghamshire to develop a comprehensive approach to improving health of the workforce, through expansion of the Wellbeing at Work programme.
- Through the Health and Wellbeing board, drive partnership action on place-based approaches to tackle the health drivers of worklessness.
- Work with the Integrated Care Systems and Integrated Care Partnerships to develop explicit commitments to improving health and employment outcomes in line with the expectations of the NHS Long Term Plan.
- Work with expert partners in Public Health England, the LEP and the Midlands Engine Economic Observatory to develop better methods of evaluating health related worklessness and assessing outcomes of employment support across local providers.



Employer leadership

The Council aims to be an employer of choice and as such considers it imperative that its workforce is representative of the communities we serve. We have already undertaken the self-assessment process to identify required actions to become an accredited Disability Confident employer.

Elected members have restated their ongoing commitment to becoming a Disability Confident employer and have agreed to progress to the next level of accreditation to become a Disability Confident Leader by the time of the next assessment in April 2021. This provides a focus for further development of the existing range of activities, procedures, provisions and guidance available to support the Council's managers to recruit, develop and retain people with disabilities.

It is important for our commitment to be recognised and understood by prospective employees so that they feel comfortable in applying for jobs with Nottinghamshire County Council in the knowledge that we aim to be an inclusive employer, seeking to support and enable people to access work opportunities. The Council acknowledges and celebrates the positive contribution that people with physical and/or mental disabilities make to its overall talent pool and it seeks to welcome them into its workforce and to lead by example with employers across Nottinghamshire.

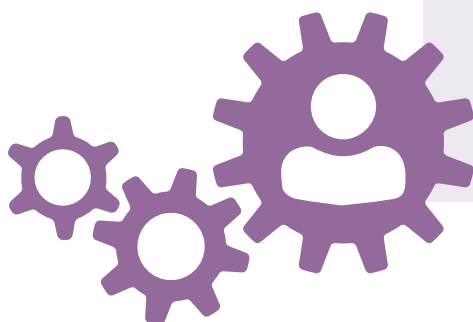
County Council Commitment

The Council aims to be an exemplar employer by modelling good practice and promoting the benefits of employing people with long term conditions and disabilities to other local employers. The council aims to go beyond the minimum statutory requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010.



Actions

- Fair and healthy work to be an explicit priority across the Council and its supply chain.
- Promote the Council to new graduates through our work with the Leonard Cheshire Change 100 Internship Programme, in our apprenticeship offer and graduate programme.
- Promote work with colleagues across the Council to develop a programme of work readiness and to provide access to employment through the supported intern route.
- Work in partnership with other Council departments to ensure 'one conversation' with employers on the support and leadership available through the Council.
- Scope future work to identify other mechanisms by which the Council can demonstrate community leadership and genuine commitment to supporting and enabling people with disabilities to remain in employment with the Council.



Support to gain and maintain employment

The Council provides employment support for priority groups through several mechanisms, both internally and through key partner organisations. Support is provided to adults with disabilities through iWork, County Enterprise Foods, Solutions 4 Data and the Employment Hub at Brooke Farm, whilst young people with additional needs are supported by the Integrated Children's Disability Service (ICDS) and the Leaving Care Team, with complementary support being provided by Inspire, Futures and Building Better Opportunities (BBO) as well as other programmes.

Current services provide person centred, holistic support to help people with disabilities and additional needs into work skills training, supported internships, apprenticeships and paid employment and all are very well regarded in what they do.

The Leaving Care team has a team of Personal Advisors and Achievement Advisors that work one-to-one with our care leavers to support their progression into employment, education or training. These advisors work closely with local businesses and educational establishments to arrange a wide variety of employment interventions. Our Local Offer for Care leavers has also enabled further engagement with preparing our young people for work through a range of workstreams.

However, there is scope for these services to improve their offer through better joint working and consistency of approach which focuses not just on getting a job but on career progression in the future. Alongside this, there needs to be a greater focus on enabling and developing wider independence in other aspects of people's lives.

There is also a need to work more closely with schools and education providers to embed a culture of aspiration towards employment and support young people and their families and carers to understand the full range of employment and learning provision available to them.

The employment support workstream will focus on ensuring that services work collaboratively and in a more joined up way, with a single employment support offer, a clear pathway to employment and focused support on work readiness for individuals, families/ carers and employers which is both aspirational and developmental.

County Council Commitment

We will:

- establish routes to employment as a key enabler in all Council services and initiatives, including commissioned services
- seek to create more traineeships, supported internships and apprenticeships for adults and young people with disabilities and additional needs across the Council
- as a good corporate parent, provide every care leaver with support in accessing opportunities such as work experience, apprenticeships, employment or mentoring
- ensure that employment support services are sufficiently resourced to effectively support disadvantaged groups into employment
- embed Preparing for Adulthood approaches across the education sector and children's services with an early focus on work readiness
- build family approaches to tackle intergenerational worklessness.



Actions

- Develop a clear statement of purpose for a single combined employment support offer with clear targets to increase the number of employment opportunities each year.
- Expand the target cohort to include adults and young people with disabilities or mental health issues, care leavers and people over 50 who have long-term conditions, mental health issues or are at risk of loneliness and isolation.
- Create a mechanism to ensure that employment support is linked to wider independence and enabling through the Adult Social Care Maximising Independence Service and Notts Enabling Service.
- Establish a clear employment support pathway which includes initial assessment, career profiling, job finding, employer engagement and support and employee support with regular reviews of progression and development needs, clear outcomes and aspirations for the future and an exit plan when people are settled to ensure better flow through the pathway.
- Work with schools and Further Education providers to review and refocus the curriculum for SEND learners on employability and work readiness. Developing employability capacity in maintained special schools and academies so that preparation for adulthood and employment is embedded from the earliest years.
- Explore options for accreditation of the employment hub programme at Brooke Farm which could in turn present additional funding opportunities.
- Update and maximise access to on-line advice and support on fair and healthy work through the Notts Help Yourself portal.
- Improve input for learners that is needed for them to access the labour market.
- Develop a suite of work readiness indicators in partnership with a local employer focus group and finalise the Employability Assessment Tool to understand the work readiness of our care leavers.



Employment and Health – key milestones

	2020	2025	2030
Foundations	- Common pathway approach for support agreed. - Health and Wellbeing Board commits to delivery of recommended actions to address health related worklessness.	200 people each year supported into work. - Education, Health and Care Plans have employment as an outcome from year 9 reviews. - County Council is a Disability Confident Leader.	- County Council is a leader in employment practice. - Comprehensive and integrated employment offer is in place.
Strategy	Implementation plan agreed by core partner.	Health and Wellbeing Board understand drivers of worklessness, and partners have strategy in place.	Comprehensive approach driven by evidence to enable people with long-term conditions to regain and retain employment across the Health and Wellbeing Board and key partners.
Partnership	- Contractual requirement for supply-chain to add social value for employment. - Strategic delivery framework for employment support is co-produced with partner organisations. - Partners agree a core set of actions to stimulate ambition and aspiration across the County.	- Apprenticeships, internships, supported employment and employment increased by 50% in supply chain. - The (two) Integrated Care System's Workforce Strategy explicitly addresses health and work through the system's roles both as a employer and in clinical decision-making. - Maximise the opportunities for residents to access existing employment support by embedding "work as a health outcome" approaches within the delivery of frontline social prescribing and First Contact Practitioner offers.	- Wellbeing at work routinely incorporated into standard practice by employers of all sizes across county. - ICS partners to maximise their reach and impact on health and employment outcomes by working together to deliver on commitments within the NHS Long Term Plan, including through inclusive employment opportunities, wellbeing of the existing workforce and embedding social value within procurement for employment, work placements, work experience and skills.
Outcomes	50 new employers signed up to Wellbeing at Work. - Integrated approach to engaging employers and managers to improve employment offer. - All 16 and 17 year olds looked after children to complete an employability assessment personal education plan termly with advisors and be offered access to work experience locally.	50 more Supported Employment placements. 36 more adults with a mental health condition on a care plan approach supported into employment. 111 more adults with a Learning Disability supported into employment. - The Industrial strategy has delivered a partnership approach to ensuring an appropriate skills and training offer is in place across providers that meets the county's demand for labour.	- All of our eligible care leavers to be in employment, education or training. - Close the skills and productivity gap across the County evidenced by job creation and take up in the County where the gap is greatest. 200 jobs, 200 apprenticeships and 200 inclusive work opportunities created through partnership and supply chain management.



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County Council**



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