

# Jobs First Evaluation: Interim Report

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# Summary

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## ***Introduction***

This is the Summary of the Interim Report of the evaluation of Jobs First, a Department of Health [DH] led demonstration site project being implemented initially in seven local authority sites in England, although only five have participated in this stage of the evaluation.

## ***Key Findings***

- Promoting a belief in the employability of people with learning disabilities was seen as a core implementation task
- Jobs First was consistently described as a spur for sites to progress efforts at attitude change
- Supportive families were felt by participants from all groups to be one of the most important elements in encouraging people with learning disabilities to seek paid work
- Increasing choice and flexibility for service users to purchase supported employment services using personal budgets was identified by most participants as the most important potential benefit of the Jobs First approach
- The general view was that it was not possible yet to draw multiple funding streams into a single individual budget to pay for supported employment. Ensuring that enough money was allocated to supported employment, whether from social care or other funding streams, was a key challenge.
- Sites have managed to implement changes and to start working with a cohort of people at a time of unprecedented difficulties for local authorities.

## ***Background***

Jobs First is testing personalised approaches to using adult social care personal budgets, in combination with other funding streams, on employment related support. The project combines key central government policy goals of increasing employment and personalising public services. People with learning disabilities in employment have been found to have higher self esteem, job satisfaction and sense of control over their lives. There is also evidence of the financial value of employment for people with learning disabilities, and long term savings for public spending. Furthermore, there is evidence that people with learning disabilities want to work.

## ***Findings***

### **Context**

The period over which Jobs First has been operating has been a difficult one financially and a turbulent one for central and local government, which has resulted in much uncertainty in the Jobs First sites. The increase in unemployment has created a perception that it is a bad time for people with learning disabilities to be seeking jobs. However, involvement with other DH projects, particularly Getting a Life, and with Right to Control, a wider Office for Disability Issues [ODI] initiative, was widely felt to be of great value in implementing Jobs First.

## **Promoting and prioritising employment**

Promoting a belief in the employability of people with learning disabilities was seen as a core implementation task for many of the Jobs First Leads. Hearing positive stories and examples illustrating the possibility and benefits of work for people with learning disabilities was the best means of changing these beliefs. A commonly held explanation for negative attitudes towards employment for people with learning disabilities was that services had been over protective.. There was general agreement that most people with learning disabilities, especially younger people, want to work and feel this is possible. However, gaining employment for people who had been using day or other services for a long time was thought to be more difficult after years of institutionalisation and for people with fluctuating conditions and complex needs, who may need more intensive support.

Managing the concerns of staff was felt by several participants to be a key role for Jobs First Leads, in order to encourage workers to sell the idea of employment to the people they work with and their families. Unsurprisingly, frontline practitioners who are negative about the idea could be a powerful influence, discouraging a person to seek employment.

In general, Jobs First Leads were positive about the degree to which a focus on employment was becoming embedded in local authority and wider public sector practice. Jobs First was consistently described as a spur for sites to progress efforts at attitude change. The tight focus of Jobs First was identified as a benefit in promoting the adoption of employment as a goal within organisations. The chance to work with a small cohort was seen as a good opportunity to develop practice locally. However, some were concerned that the short timescale of the project would mean it was not possible to generate sustainable change.

Supportive families were felt by participants from all groups to be one of the most important elements in encouraging people with learning disabilities to seek paid work. Several Jobs First Leads and senior managers identified families' and carers' fear of change as a big barrier to adopting employment as a goal, although there was a strong perception that if workers took time with family members and explained the risks and benefits, most would be supportive of the idea.

## **Personalised approaches to employment-related support**

Increasing choice and flexibility for service users to purchase supported employment services using personal budgets was identified by most participants as the most important potential benefit of the Jobs First approach. However, concerns were raised by Jobs First Leads about the pressures that arise from managing personal budgets. For some, market forces were seen as a safeguard of the quality of supported employment, as people would be able to move providers. For others, the preferred safeguard was quality standards agreed with the local authority. Furthermore, there was some concern that prioritising employment over meeting someone's other social care needs may lead to them having unmet personal care needs, which would never be acceptable.

## **Supported employment providers**

Jobs First is addressing an important interdependency issue in relation to the local supply and demand of supported employment: how can new types of provision emerge when fears about the lack of available services mean that there is uncertainty about encouraging demand? Having a good estimate for the cost of employment related support was thought

to help balance the allocation of resources to employment and other social care needs, and the DH report on costing supported employment (Allott and Atkinson, 2011<sup>1</sup>) was aimed to provide this kind of estimate. In terms of job coaches, there was some debate over about whether social care support workers can carry out job coaching tasks without extra training. It was thought that many longstanding day service staff might find it especially difficult to learn the new skills and to commit to the necessary refocusing on employment over care and leisure.

### **Funding employment related support**

Ensuring that enough money was allocated to supported employment, whether from social care or other funding streams, was a key challenge. Specific amounts allocated by adult social care RASs for supported employment were often very low: one Jobs First lead quoted £54 a week on average. However, changing the RAS was not seen as a priority for Jobs First because of the difficulties of achieving this within the timeframe of the project. Some sites had avoided establishing employment within the RAS and had been flexible in letting people use money allocated for other aspects (e.g. social inclusion) for supported employment.

Some progress had been made with regards to accessing different non social care funding streams, although the general view was that it was not possible yet to draw these into a single individual budget to pay for supported employment. Most of the other funding streams tended to be tied up in services (Work Choice) or colleges (Additional Learning Support for learners under 25), making it impossible to access them as a cash payment. Also, different sets of eligibility criteria and assessments have to be met before money can be accessed, complicating the processes. Access to Work was identified as a more flexible source of funding, although there were reports of conflicting advice being given about how it could be accessed and used. Right to Control sites have tended to leave active negotiations with the different funding agencies to the Right to Control project team. Details about the balance of funding from the different streams that is used in the implementation of Jobs First have yet to be worked out by sites.

There were several examples where local adult social care RASs were reported to subtract an amount of money from the allocation of social care funds if other funding streams had been accessed. However, it was felt that if support planners can distinguish different aspects of support to be paid for by the different funding streams, such discounting could be avoided. In a time of cutbacks in public spending, it is likely to be difficult to persuade senior managers to view bringing together of funding streams positively as co-funding (as opposed to 'double funding'). Managers were reported to be facing pressures to cut organisations' budgets, which sustained thinking in narrow organisational silos.

### ***Discussion and conclusion***

It is obviously too early to draw any firm conclusions about Jobs First as a whole. It is important, however to stress that sites have managed to implement changes and to get started on working with a cohort of people for Jobs First at a time of unprecedented difficulties for local authorities. Jobs First already appears to have been a useful spur to reinforce and reinvigorate staff to develop new approaches to supported employment, particularly to pilot the use of personal budgets.

Changing attitudes and structures have emerged as the most important themes over the early implementation phase of the project. Sites have worked to change attitudes about the abilities and desires of people with learning disabilities to work, and also to address some of the barriers in terms of impact on families, using multiple funding streams and the availability of employment services. However sites are in the midst of working with key groups such as care managers to translate some of the attitudinal changes into practice. Encouraging more provision of supported employment has also proved challenging. Implementation of Jobs First is complex and can be characterised as working on multiple fronts both within local authorities and across the locality.

In the follow up stage of the evaluation we will focus on outcomes of the Jobs First approach in terms of employment, and costs of services delivered. Interviews with people with learning disabilities and their families will provide insights into the experiences of seeking and getting jobs. Second round interviews with Jobs First Leads will focus on the outcomes of engagement with different organisations and employers and the degree of success at accessing multiple sources of funding.

## ***About the study***

The evaluation is addressing the following research questions:

1. Does the Jobs First approach make a difference to the employment outcomes of people with learning disabilities, compared with standard services?
2. What are the costs and benefits of the Jobs First approach to supported employment in comparison with standard social care and other services?
3. What issues are raised in the implementation of the Jobs First approach?
4. How do people with learning disabilities experience the Jobs First intervention as impacting on their lives?

The multi-methods approach of the evaluation involves comparing employment outcomes for the Jobs First cohort with a matched group of people receiving standard social care and other services. This interim report focuses on interviews undertaken with Jobs First Lead officers in sites, senior managers and three interviews with national leads.

## **Progress to April 2011**

We have received case record data for 74 people with learning disabilities, 44 in the Jobs First cohort and 30 in the comparison group. These groups are fairly similar in terms of age gender and ethnicity and level of learning disability. All those selected were eligible for adult social care on the basis of Fair Access to Care Services criteria, which is likely to mean they have moderate to severe learning disabilities. However none of the sites had selected anyone for the Jobs First cohort or the comparison group who they rated as having severe learning disabilities. We have undertaken interviews with eight Jobs First leads (in five sites), four senior managers and three national leads. Interviews have been conducted with 25 people with learning disabilities, although they have not been included in this report, as they were being conducted during the analysis and writing stages. The final Jobs First Report will be available in 2012.

<sup>1</sup>Allott, S. and Atkinson, E. (2011) *Jobs First: Funding employment support with individual budgets*. London, Department of Health. Available from [www.valuingpeoplenow.dh.gov.uk/content/employment-resources-hub](http://www.valuingpeoplenow.dh.gov.uk/content/employment-resources-hub)

# Part one: Introduction

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## Chapter 1 Background

Increasing employment and personalising public services have been key aims of government policy over the past 13 years, and continue to be central goals of the coalition government elected in June 2010. Jobs First combines both of these elements. This is the interim report of the evaluation of Jobs First, which is due to be completed in autumn 2011. Jobs First was first announced as a commitment within the *New Opportunities* White Paper (HM Government 2009) and is also a key commitment within the *Valuing Employment Now* strategy (HM Government 2009). At this time, Public Sector Agreements (PSA) targets were very influential in motivating change in local government, as they were linked to concrete consequences if targets were not met. One such target, PSA 16, specifically related to levels of employment for people with learning disabilities, which was seen to contribute to the overarching aim of increasing social inclusion. Jobs First was linked to a set of initiatives aimed at supporting PSA 16, such as the work led by the Cabinet Office on lead professionals. It is an important strand of work supporting *Putting People First* and the new *Vision for Adult Social Care* policies and it also supports wider Government policy addressing worklessness. Jobs First crosses over several other initiatives related to increasing employment of people with learning disabilities, such as Right to Control, Getting a Life and Project Search. Right to Control is an Office for Disability Issues (ODI)-led project that gives eligible disabled people a right to an individual budget (or personal budget) for all of their support entitlement. Getting A Life is a project for young people (between 14 and 24 years) with moderate to severe learning disabilities. Its focus is on raising aspirations, making changes to the system of support and creating a clear path to paid employment (Getting a Life website<sup>1</sup>). Project Search is aimed at supporting young people with learning disabilities and autism into employment, via a year long internship programme comprising three work rotations with a large host employer. Jobs First is being implemented in four of the eight Right to Control Trailblazer sites; three of the 12 Getting A Life sites and one of the 14 Project Search sites.

Alongside these initiatives is Work Choice, which is a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) scheme that was implemented in October 2010 and brought together three previous programmes to support disabled people into paid work (Workstep, Work Preparation and the Job Introduction Scheme). The Work Choice programme offers support to people with disabilities, whom are not able to benefit from other DWP programmes, to get paid jobs. Disabled people can be referred to Work Choice by a Disability Employment Adviser, a local authority, primary care trust or local education department, as spelled out in the guidance for providers (DWP, 2010).

Following referral, the programme has three modules: 1. Work Entry Support, which focuses on confidence building and job seeking and can last for up to six months. The level of support builds up to 16 hours a week in the difference activities involved; 2. Short to Medium Term In- Work Support, when the person has a job of 16 hours or more, a provider works with the employer and employee to identify and provide the support needed to keep the job and make progress. This module can last up to two years, but has much less intense

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gettingalife.org.uk](http://www.gettingalife.org.uk)



support, a maximum of eight hours contact time a month. 3. Longer-term In-Work Support, which is only provided for people who need ongoing support in work, to keep a job and develop a career.

Work Choice is mainly delivered by a set of organisations who bid to be providers. However, in 'Right to Control' sites, people who are wanting to work 16 hours or more a week are able to request that they receive money instead of the support offered. This has been worked out to be about £2,000 per person (Allott and Atkinson, 2011).

### **The Jobs First approach**

Jobs First's primary aim is to increase the number of people with moderate to severe learning disabilities who are eligible for local authority adult social care who get paid jobs. Employment goals are to be given priority over leisure and day care in reviews and assessments so that people consider 'Jobs First'. In addition, employment is to be considered when major life changes, such as housing, are being discussed. Crucially, Jobs First was set up to develop the use of personal budgets to purchase supported employment services, which in turn will require some development of employment services and their workforces. The original intention was to identify eight local authority sites to take part in this demonstration programme; eventually the following seven sites took part:

- Essex County Council
- Herefordshire County Council
- Leicester City Council
- London Borough of Newham
- Northamptonshire County Council
- North Tyneside Council
- Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

However, two sites (Essex and Oldham) have not been able to take part in the demonstration site project, for a variety of reasons, relating to the general turbulence in local authorities. Site profiles for the five participating sites are given in the appendix. These show that the sites cover a wide geographic spread, and include authorities of different types (unitary, county council and metropolitan boroughs). Overall population ranges from 179,122 (Herefordshire) to 683,791 (Northamptonshire), and the populations of people with learning disabilities who have a service in each authority ranges from 540 (Herefordshire) to 1637 (Northamptonshire). All the sites are well progressed with personalisation, all having over 25 percent of people with learning disabilities with personal budgets.

In each demonstration site, the aim is that 20 adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities will use their personal budget to fund the support they need to find paid employment. They will use social care funding alongside additional funding streams, although as Allott and Atkinson (2011) point out, some of these, (the Independent Living Fund for example) are undergoing transition and may not be accessible:

- Adult Social Care Funding
- Work Choice (in Right to Control Trailblazer sites)
- Access to Work
- Independent Living Fund

- Additional Learning Support for learners under 25
- Independent Specialist Provision funds from the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)
- Supporting People

In Late 2010, REMPLOY, an organisation providing employment related support to people with all kinds of disabilities made an offer to all non Right to Control Jobs First sites to supplement the personal budgets of the Jobs First cohort by £4,000. This was to be paid as cash and managed in the same way as the personal budget. This represented more than the equivalent cash that people could access by taking their Work Choice as an Individual Budget. This represents an additional funding stream for the cohort.

The project started in April 2010 and is set to run until the end of March 2011, although the evaluation will be completed in September 2011, to allow for a six month follow up of the cohorts. A follow up study will report one year later in September 2012, offering greater longitudinal evidence about the impact of the Jobs First approach.

Jobs First sites have been identifying their cohort of 20 people with learning disabilities who initially receive a 'job focussed review' and will use their personal budgets to contribute towards the cost of employment support. Sites have also been asked to experiment with different approaches to brokerage and to identify additional approaches that might lead to good employment outcomes for individuals.

In 2010, the Department of Health commissioned the Social Care Workforce Research Unit to undertake an evaluation of Jobs First. Part of the Unit's remit is to investigate new roles in social care, such as a job coach, which makes this evaluation fit well with the Unit's overall programme of work. Furthermore, the Jobs First project involves altering the remit of brokers working with people with learning disabilities, creating a variant social care role, which again makes this a valuable study for the Unit.

This is the interim report of this evaluation, which is due to be completed and to report in autumn 2011. The report starts with a summary of the policy background and literature about personalisation and supported employment, both of which are at the heart of the Jobs First demonstration sites project. Following this introductory section, the report will specify the evaluation aims and objectives, outline the methods used and report on progress to date in the implementation of the project and the evaluation. Findings from initial interviews with professionals in five of the sites will be described and discussed; and some emerging conclusions drawn.

## ***Policy background***

*Valuing Employment Now* (HMG 2009) set out the previous Labour Government's aim: 'to radically improve employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities in England, and particularly for people with moderate and severe learning disabilities' (HMG, 2009). The aim was to close the gap between the rate of employment for people with moderate to severe learning disabilities and the employment rate for people with disabilities as a whole. In the wider working population 10 percent are self-employed, although this is very rare for people with learning disabilities. *Valuing Employment Now* also identified self-employment as a particularly good approach for people with moderate to severe learning disabilities.

The current Coalition Government, elected in June 2010, has continued this policy emphasis on supporting employment for people with disabilities. In the *Vision for Adult Social Care* (HMG, 2010), employment was identified as a key part of the social care agenda. Employment support is presented as supporting the ‘Big Society’ concept at the heart of Coalition Government policy. Employment support is presented as a key role for local authorities:

*Local government can be a catalyst for social action. In some areas, people will need the support of councils to stimulate a community response. This may mean encouraging and supporting **employment**, local mentoring and volunteering activity at an individual level’. (HMG, 2010: 12 **emphasis added**).*

Employment is also identified as a means of saving public money, which is another central goal of policy: ‘Specifically, getting more people into **employment** has well-documented benefits including generating savings for the taxpayer’ (HMG 2010: 23 **emphasis added**).

In addition, *the Vision for Adult Social Care* (HMG 2010) links employment support to a set of familiar themes in social care policy:

- Developing preventive services, as a means to ‘meet emerging needs’ (HMG 2010: 13).
- Widening the benefits of personalisation, through ensuring that access to employment support is available across the country (HMG 2010: 18).
- Development of a ‘plural market’ (HMG 2010: 21), which ‘can also include more mainstream and universal service providers – for instance, those offering transport or leisure options, or employment and education support – which are able to cater for people’s needs without operating exclusively in the social care sector’ (HMG 2010: 21).
- Improving partnership working, in which closer working is to be developed by adopting a ‘joined-up approach between social care, housing, employment and other sectors’ (HMG 2010: 23).

Jobs First and Getting a Life are specifically mentioned in the *Vision for Adult Social Care* as:

...already showing how people with learning disabilities can use their personal budgets, drawn together with other appropriate funding, to buy the support they need to get and keep a job or self-employment. Similarly, it is likely that expenditure on adults with significant disabilities could be reduced if funding were used for supported employment rather than leisure-focused day services. (HMG, 2010: 23)

This evaluation aims to produce evidence to show whether and how the approach of Jobs First to use personal budgets to refocus social care support on employment makes a positive difference to employment outcomes for people with learning disabilities.

## ***Personalisation***

As we note above, one central element of Jobs First is the development of personalisation of social care support, which underpins government efforts to ‘transform’ (DH 2008) adult

social care systems (Manthorpe et al 2011). The personalisation agenda encompasses a broad range of policies over the past ten years. The overall focus is to support independent living through increasing choice and control over the support and equipment needed to enable people to live independent and full lives (Carr and Dittrich, 2008).

A key mechanism for delivering personalisation has been personal budgets. Personal budgets derived from Individual Budgets, which themselves were a development from Direct Payments (DPs), introduced by the Community Care (Direct Payments) Act, 1996, which allowed local authorities to give people money instead of services for the first time. Subsequently, access has broadened in 2000 and 2003, which ultimately led to local authorities being required to offer DPs to all those eligible for publicly funded social care services. Such options for support were introduced after a long campaign by disabled people of working age, for whom the ability to have individualised support at specific times for specific reasons was very attractive. Among other groups, however, take up was patchy, although increasingly people with learning disabilities started to receive direct payments, often managed by carers and relatives. There has been evidence that direct payments were producing good outcomes, particularly for disabled people of working age (Scourfield, 2007). In 2005, the then Labour government introduced the idea of Individual Budgets (IBs) (Prime Minister's Strategy Group, 2005), which it was hoped would help spread the perceived benefits of Direct Payments to those unable or unwilling to take on the employment responsibilities they might entail. Central to IBs was the idea that giving people knowledge of how much in monetary terms is available to pay for the support they need would enable them to take more control over how they were used and therefore result in better and more appropriate services (Stevens et al, 2011). Crucially, in addition to DPs a number of different 'deployment' methods were to be made available, in which the management of IBs by care manager, carers, relatives and third party individuals or organisations as well as individual service users, was to be encouraged. A second major aim of the IB pilots was to test out the possibilities of integrating a number of funding streams:

- Supporting People
- Access to Work
- Disabled Facilities Grants
- Independent Living Fund
- Integrated Community Equipment Services

(Moran et al, 2011)

However, as Moran et al (2011) describe, the evidence of the national evaluation of the IB pilot projects was that this proved very difficult to implement, owing to four main challenges. First, primary legislation and regulation 'effectively prohibited integration at local level' (p239). Second, individual IB holders remained subject to the separate requirements of each funding stream, which limited flexibility in terms of the use of money. Third, concerns were expressed by professionals working for the agencies providing different funding streams that allowing a 'top slice' of their budgets for IB holder, might destabilise existing services. Finally, it was feared that the IB approach might increase demand in an unsustainable way for the different funding streams and for adult social care, which itself could result in increased pressure on the different budgets involved (Moran et al, 2011: 239). However, adult social care IB project leads identified three main advantages of attempting to integrate funding. First, from an adult social care perspective, it was

thought to be advantageous to increase awareness of and applications for funding from other funding streams, especially outside the local authority. Second, there was a strong sense in which the IB pilot resulted in renewed and improved relationships between adult social care project managers and other funding stream leads locally. Third, in the limited examples of success, integration of funding did bring genuine benefits to service users and their families, in terms of 'Streamlined assessment process with less duplication, more straightforward support planning' (Moran et al, 2011: 239)

This suggests the value of the focus in the Jobs First demonstration site project of the aim to 'braid' funding from different streams. This is perhaps a lower level of ambition in relation to integration compared with the IB pilots, but potentially could bring similar benefits. The extent to which people with learning disabilities in the Jobs First cohort access resources from multiple funding streams in a way that can meaningfully be thought of as representing a single budget, will be an important measure of the success of the project. Also the accounts of efforts to do this could be important learning for development of this approach.

While personalisation was initially a New Labour initiative, it appears to be very much at the centre of the Coalition Government's approach to public services. The impulse to reduce costs and potentially radically reduce the role of the state (Bellamy, 2011) is very much to the fore in the new Government's approach to personalisation. For example, in the *Vision for adult social care* (DH, 2010), personalisation is linked to the Big Society, and requiring minimum state support to:

*...transform care, not by looking upwards to the state, but outwards to open communities – by empowering individuals and unlocking the power and creativity of neighbourhoods to deliver the Big Society.*

Twin drives can be identified for personalisation: dissatisfaction with services and reducing the role of the state, whilst promoting consumerism. Services were felt to be inflexible and professionally controlled in a way that led to disabled people being seen as passive recipients of care (Scourfield, 2007). It is this that drove the campaign for Direct Payments described above. However, the development of personalisation can also be seen as supporting a very different policy stream, continuing a programme started in the 1970s and 1980s. This aimed to reduce the role of the state and introduce market forces in public sector provision, since choice and consumerism were felt to improve quality and good outcomes (Stevens et al 2011) and thereby make more efficient use of public money.

Such a 'radical individualism' (Burton and Kagan 2006:302), saw individual choices as supreme, at the expense of more collective approaches to developing public services. Several critiques of the focus on choice have been made (Clarke et al, 2007; Stevens et al 2011). First related to the potential for choice, conceived as purchasing power, to increase inequality owing to the tendency for better off and less disabled people being better able to exercise free choice in market conditions. Secondly, choice as presented within policy tends to underplay important complexities in relation to power relations and the public-private nature of decision making in service provision both of which interact in complex ways with individual choices (Clarke et al 2007).

These debates have relevance for the evaluation of Jobs First, since this initiative aims precisely to increase purchasing control over supported employment services, in an effort to increase levels of employment of people with learning disabilities. The underpinning idea therefore fits with the general thrust of personalisation policy although links with both the neo liberal and disability movement's agendas can be identified.

## ***Supported employment***

In the *Supported employment and job coaching best practice guideline standards* (DH, 2010), supported employment is defined as:

*an evidence-based and personalised approach to support people with significant disabilities into real jobs, where they can fulfil their employment aspirations, and achieve social and economic inclusion. (HMG, 2011:1)*

Real jobs are those on the open employment market, where people are paid the going rate for the job, experience the same working conditions, are appreciated by colleagues and managers and are treated the same as other employees.

Supporting people with moderate to severe learning disabilities to get paid jobs in the open employment market has a relatively long history in the United States (US), where provision of supported employment was enshrined in legislation in 1984 (Beyer and Robinson, 2009). However, these authors note that development of supported employment in the US tailed off after 2000: since then, funding for segregated provision has outstripped supported employment, resulting in calls for transferring investment to supported employment from segregated provision, similar to current calls in the UK to divert funds from day services.

In the UK, the drive for supported employment for people with learning disabilities started much later. Until very recently, there has been no clear definition of or standards for supported employment, and it is only through the support for Jobs First provided by the Department of Health that work has been done to identify unit costs for providing someone with a job (Allott and Atkinson, 2011).

Beyer and Robinson (2009) note that much of the evidence in their literature review was gathered from the US, partly because of the longer history of supported employment in the country. They found the following factors to be linked to increased likelihood of people with learning disabilities being employed:

- Severity of disability and gender (see also Emerson et al 2005); people with milder learning disabilities and men being more likely to gain and keep employment, which reflects gender patterns in employment in the non-disabled community (Jahoda et al 2008)
- Work experience and summer or Saturday jobs for teenagers and young people
- Those who complete high school (ie stay at school until 18)
- Receiving vocational-technical training
- Duration of community based training
- Age appropriate integration with non-disabled peers
- Use of a job coach

(Beyer and Robinson, 2009: 15)

In addition, Emerson et al (2005) undertook a national scale survey of people with learning disabilities in England on behalf of the NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre, involving interviews with 2974 people. While this is cross sectional data, and therefore making attribution of cause and effect difficult, this was one of the largest studies of its kind, one that had never been done before in England. In addition to some of the factors identified by Beyer and Robinson (2009), Emerson et al's (2005) survey identified the following factors making it more likely that a person with a learning disability would be in supported employment:

- Lived with fewer people
- Saw friends who had learning difficulties less often
- Were white
- Lived in an area with higher employment
- Had good general health
- Saw friends who did not have learning difficulties more often

However, Beyer and Robinson (2009) did not find strong evidence that volunteering for people with learning disabilities is linked strongly to people moving on to paid work. Emerson et al (2005) also found that about two thirds of respondents who did not currently work, would like to do so in the future.

### ***Approaches to supported employment***

Beyer and Robinson (2009) detected evidence in favour of a particular approach to supported employment. This was based on the premise that people with learning disabilities learn differently to people without learning disabilities and typically respond better to demonstrations rather than verbal instructions. Essentially the approach that appears to have the strongest evidence involves learning and training on the job, as opposed to learning skills to become 'work ready', in colleges or special learning posts. This idea includes social skills as well as the practical aspects of the job. One common approach, systematic instruction, has substantial evidence of effectiveness. It involves 'breaking tasks down into stimulus: response chains and using prompting hierarchies and reinforcement to teach them' (Beyer and Robinson, 2009: 11). Recently, more evidence has emerged about developing support from other disabled colleagues, rather than directly from specialist job coaches. This has been linked to better employment outcomes and better integration in the workplace (Beyer and Robinson, 2009; Cole et al, 2007). However, finding and training job coaches remains problematic and there is a general shortage of supported employment services: indeed increasing the numbers of job coaches was a specific goal identified in *Valuing Employment Now* (HMG, 2009)

### ***Job retention***

A varied picture of retention has been found in the literature, with figures of between 20 and 80 percent of people remaining in work in different studies over the past 20 years, with no obvious pattern emerging over time. Factors involved in job loss include loss of motivation, understanding of task, attendance and social attitudes and interaction skills, although as noted above, teaching these on the job has had better results. One study quoted in the review found that women fared better in terms of retention.

## ***Financial implications***

There has been mixed evidence about the financial benefits to people with learning disabilities in supported employment, in the US and the UK, and only one study, in North Lanarkshire generated positive findings. The North Lanarkshire supported employment service evaluation (Beyer, 2008), based on 88 people with learning disabilities, found that of those in employment, where the average working week was 22.1 hours, people were 94% better off compared with being on benefits. The service was felt to have a cost benefit to the community per person of over £6,000, although exact costings were hard to work out. Partly, this was because the service was well established after a period of investment, which was not taken into account

The amount of support needed has been shown to decrease over time, thus implying that cost savings should be possible. Indeed Beyer and Robinson (2009) identify much evidence to suggest that supported employment can bring financial savings in terms of the costs of services and welfare benefits, compared with sheltered employment and traditional day services. For example, the evaluation of the Kent Supported Employment Service (Kilby and Beyer, 2010) found savings to the local authority and taxpayer in terms of reduced welfare payments.

## ***Impact of employment***

People in open employment have been found to have higher self esteem, job satisfaction and sense of control over their lives compared with those in sheltered employment or traditional day support (Beyer et al (2009). Jahoda et al (2008) undertook a review of evidence about the impact of being employed on people with learning disabilities and concluded that despite some methodological limitations of most of the research, being in supported employment had positive impacts on quality of life and well being in terms of control, self esteem and depression. There was more doubt in terms of evidence about the impact of supported employment on social integration, with some studies identifying no difference. One study reported by Jahoda et al (2008), suggested a potential negative impact in terms of comparisons with non disabled colleagues, which could be a threat to self esteem. Not that this is an argument against people being employed in the open workplace, but it suggests the need for support and awareness of the potential emotional impacts, focusing on the wider social status benefits afforded by being in employment, as Jaohoda et al (2008) observe.

However, the evidence in terms of impact on social integration is less positive, with only very small gains in terms of relationships that extend beyond the workplace and a tendency for the most important relationships to remain with staff. Being in employment has been found to increase feelings of autonomy, even if people are working in jobs that do not require people to exercise much of it. In such cases, Jahoda et al argue, the increased social status and having more money could lead to greater sense of autonomy in the wider context of people's lives. In their conclusion, Jahoda et al (2008) argue that while there has been much evidence of positive impacts on employment, particularly in relation to overall quality of life and autonomy, the limitations in terms of social integration in the workplace suggest a need for directed support. Also, they point to the lack of exploration of how types of work and pay levels impact on these outcomes thus inviting further research on these more nuanced aspects of supported employment for people with learning disabilities.



The evaluation of Jobs First therefore is focusing on several different aspects of the project, all of which are necessary in order to understand its impact. We are considering the overall acceptance of employment as a goal for people with learning disabilities alongside developments in personalisation, including use of different funding streams and the development of supported employment services which people with learning disabilities can use their personal budgets to purchase. Finally, different approaches that are taken to supporting people with learning disabilities to get and keep paid jobs will also be reflected, although this aspect will be much more of a focus for the final report, when there is more experience to report.

## Chapter 2 Evaluation aims and methods

### **Main evaluation questions**

The evaluation of the Jobs First approach (see Box) addresses a large number of research questions; the primary ones are summarised as follows:

#### ***The Jobs First approach***

*Jobs First's primary aim is to increase numbers of people with moderate to severe learning disabilities who are eligible for local authority adult social care who get paid jobs. Employment goals are to be given priority over leisure and day care in reviews and assessments so that people consider 'Jobs First'. In addition, employment is to be considered when major life changes, such as housing, are being discussed. Crucially, Jobs First was set up to develop the use of personal budgets to purchase supported employment services, which in turn will require some development of employment services and their workforces.*

- 1. Does the Jobs First approach make a difference to the employment outcomes of people with learning disabilities, compared with standard services?**
- 2. What are the costs and benefits of the Jobs First approach to supported employment in comparison with standard services?**
- 3. What issues are raised in the implementation of the Jobs First approach?**
- 4. How do people with learning disabilities experience the Jobs First intervention as impacting on their lives?**

We will be addressing these questions from the perspectives of key actors: Carers/relatives, people receiving Jobs First; Senior social care managers; Jobs First project leads; social workers/care managers, employment workers; and a range of other professionals.

This Interim Report focuses on the third of the main research questions. Originally it was intended to cover more of the research questions at this point, but for reasons that we outline below in the Progress Section, the demonstration site projects have been behind in their implementation, which has delayed the research.

The evaluation is addressing a number of specific issues. We group them here under the primary research question, although some may be relevant to more than one:

- 1. Does the Jobs First approach make a difference to the employment outcomes of people with learning disabilities, compared with standard services?**
  - a. How many people in each demonstration site have found paid work?
  - b. What patterns of employment contract are emerging?
  - c. What number of hours is worked by each person in paid employment?
  - d. What type of tasks and jobs are people doing?

- e. What forms of brokerage are most effective in supporting people through the support planning process and achieving employment outcomes? Who best performed the brokerage role? Does it present value for money?
  - f. Monitoring of ethnicity, gender, age and level of disability of people taking part in the project, and of sexual orientation where this is raised as a subject within the qualitative interviews. To include specific information on different impairment groups within the cohort, for example, any instances of people with autism, mental ill health, etc. gaining work. What measures were taken to reach out to the most excluded groups, and with what success?
  - g. Where did people live? (rural area or not; proximity to work)
- 2. What are the costs and benefits of the Jobs First approach to supported employment in comparison with standard services?**
- a. What funding streams were drawn down, how were they used to support employment outcomes, what barriers were encountered and how they were overcome?
  - b. What financial benefits were claimed in each case?
  - c. What were the costs of service use for both groups before and after the Jobs First intervention?
  - d. How long and what processes did it take to move each person into work – what was the range in terms of the degree of support needed?
- 3. What issues are raised in the implementation of the Jobs First approach?**
- a. What practice developments in terms of reviewing, person centred support planning and supported employment were used and appear successful? When (if at all) is it possible to taper support in the workplace?
  - b. What measures were taken to reach out to the most excluded groups, and with what success?
  - c. What measures were taken to encourage agencies to work across organisational boundaries and to smooth interactions with tax and benefit agencies and with what degree of success?
  - d. What barriers were encountered in coming off benefits? What measures were successful in encouraging people to come off benefits?
  - e. What measures were taken in the course of the project to enable housing choices to be made that are not a barrier to paid employment?
  - f. What measures were taken in the course of the project to allow local authorities to commission supported employment for people using an individual budget to pay for their support? How did supported employment providers adapt to the market?
  - g. Does co location with other VEN/ODI projects lead to more people taking up jobs? Does it help to give service users a more streamlined experience of buying a service or building up support?
  - h. What were the most effective means of engaging employers? What adjustments did employers make to their working practices? How successful were these measures?
  - i. What training and development is effective in motivating professionals to promote employment to people with learning disabilities? What further training and development needs do professionals have? To include social care professionals, Jobcentre Plus teams, Connexions, schools, etc.

#### **4. How do people with learning disabilities experience the Jobs First intervention as impacting on their lives?**

- a. What was the degree of choice over how employment support was provided?
- b. Were any individuals at risk of financial abuse as a consequence of their participation in the project and how were they empowered or safeguarded?
- c. Were there any examples of the 'benefit trap?' (people being or perceiving themselves as financially worse off when working?)
- d. How did people and their family experience having an Individual Budget? (personal budget) Did it improve the quality of their interaction with services? Did it lead to the outcomes they wanted?
- e. How did people get to work – any transport problems and how were they resolved?
- f. How were health needs and requirements for disability adjustments responded to in the workplace? What was the role, if any, of occupational health?

We have started to address these questions, mainly focusing on the facilitating factors and barriers to implementation at an authority level, given the delays that occurred in the project. The evaluation will combine an analysis of case records with face to face interviews with people with learning disabilities and members of the Jobs First teams in the sites (at the beginning and end of the study) and single interviews with a wide range of other stakeholders (see below for a full list).

## ***Design and Methods***

### **Design**

A multi methods design is essential for an evaluation of this kind of complex intervention in order to capture quantitative measures of impact and qualitative experiences of different participants and stakeholders in the settings.

The evaluation involves two distinct strands. First is a comparison study, in which the employment status and support needs of people with learning disabilities using Jobs First are compared with a group of people who receive standard services matched for key characteristics and selected from the same sites. Key impact information is being collected at the point at which their support plans are signed off and near the end of the evaluation and any changes over time will be examined. The second strand of work is more qualitative and focuses on a set of issues related to process and implementation of Jobs First.

### **Comparison group study**

The purpose of the comparison group is to compare changes occurring to a group of people with learning disabilities benefiting from Jobs First with others, with similar circumstances as possible, who are not selected into the project. Employment is the main outcome measure: complementary measures include job satisfaction, types of jobs and hours worked per week.

In addition we aim to explore the following issues using information about budgets for both the Jobs First and the matched comparison in each of the seven sites:

- Is public money saved overall by people moving into work and being less reliant on services? What is the cost benefit ratio?
- Does brokerage make a difference to the employment outcomes of this group? Does it present value for money?

In order to make these two groups as similar as possible, we asked sites to match the comparison and Jobs First groups on level of learning disability, age, gender and distance from the workplace. In addition, we are looking at the types of services used/size of personal budget, living arrangements (i.e. whether living with a carer/relative, living independently, in support living or in some kind of residential service), in order to assess whether the two groups are similar enough to make a comparison.

This design is intended to give an indication of the impact of Jobs First in direct comparison with normal services. For the Jobs First group, we are gathering data on the costs of the Jobs First intervention, subsequent costs of supporting people in employment and care costs. Similar cost data is being gathered for the comparison group, including the cost of any employment support they receive. A set of baseline data has been constructed, derived from the case records held by sites on people receiving the Jobs First intervention and people in the comparison group.

In order to aid selection of a comparison group, a 'selection tool' was developed, into which sites could enter data about the Jobs First cohort as it was selected, and then identify matched individuals. In addition, a case record form was developed and piloted with the sites; amendments were made on the basis of comments received. In particular, we originally wanted to include 'activities of daily living' on the form: however, sites were unhappy about providing this information, with project leads responding that the information was too medicalised and not relevant. The idea was to identify the kinds of needs people had, in order to develop a fine grained understanding of the impact of such factors in getting a job. However, because of the level of resistance, we decided to drop this factor from the case record data we requested about the Jobs First cohort and comparison groups. The full baseline data form is included in the appendix. We are about to design a follow up case record data form, which will be used to measure outcomes. The baseline data form covered the following areas:

- Age, gender and ethnicity
- Conditions and syndromes (e.g. Downs)
- Level of learning disability (a three point scale from Moderate to Severe)
- Risks to and from others
- Informal care
- FACS eligibility level
- Previous social care package
- Non social care support (e.g. from Supporting People services)
- Benefits claimed
- Financial contribution
- Whether currently uses a job coach or job broker
- How social care resources are allocated and managed (e.g. Direct Payments)
- Employment status past and present

- Tenure, accommodation and household composition

### **Implementation strand**

Semi structured interviews are being undertaken with a range of stakeholders to explore experiences of these aspects identified in the research brief. Interviews covering these topics are being held with the following groups:

- A subsample of people with learning disabilities receiving the Jobs First intervention
- A sample of relatives/carers of people with learning disabilities receiving the Jobs First intervention
- Jobs First leads
- Job coaches and brokers
- Adult social care professionals
- Jobcentre Plus teams
- Connexions teams
- School staff
- Right to Control leads
- Employers
- Managers within social care agencies
- National Jobs First leads and training and development consultants
- Senior managers in adult social care departments, housing providers, Supporting People or similar staff and NHS trusts (primary care and secondary care)

### ***Progress to March 2011***

Table 1 shows the numbers of interviews undertaken to date. We have interviewed eight Jobs First leads and four senior managers in adult social care departments in the five 'active' sites (in one site there was no senior manager involved in the project). Interviews with other stakeholders are being undertaken including national consultants and leads (three interviews), adult social care professionals (three interviews) and Right to Control leads (one interview). The remainder of these interviews will be completed by summer 2011. The first round of interviews with people with learning disabilities has started, but at the time of writing, interviews have been completed and transcribed in three sites and analysis has not commenced.

**Table 1 Interviews completed to April 2011**

<b>Participant Group</b>	<b>Round one interviews: Winter 2010</b>		<b>Single interviews: over the course of the evaluation 2011</b>		<b>Round two (6 month follow up): Summer 2011</b>	
	Target	Progress	Target	Progress	Target	Progress
A subsample of people using services receiving the Jobs First intervention	30	25			30	0
Jobs' First leads	10	8			10	0
Relatives/carers of a subsample of people using services receiving the Jobs First intervention			30	0		
Adult social care professionals			14	3		
Senior managers in social care agencies, housing providers, Supporting People departments, NHS trusts			10	4		
Right to Control Leads			4	1		
Job Coaches and brokers			14	0		
Local Employers			14	0		
Mainstream employment support (Jobcentre Plus and Connexions teams)			10	0		
School staff			10	0		
Local Authority Adult Social Care Training staff			10	0		
National Jobs First and GAL leads; training and development consultants			8	3		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>

**Baseline data collection to April 2011**

We have received records for 74 people with learning disabilities who have been selected for the Jobs First (44) cohort and the comparison group (30). This represents less than half the required sample of 40 (20 in each group) from each site of the five currently active sites. One site has not supplied any data, and others are partially completed. This has been for a variety of reasons, mainly to do with pressures at the sites making it hard for them to dedicate time to getting data to the evaluation team.

**Table 2 Sample by site**

<b>Site</b>	<b>Jobs First Cohort</b>		<b>Comparison Group</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Herefordshire	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
Leicester	8	(18)	0	(0)	8	(11)
Newham	8	(18)	9	(30)	17	(23)
North Tyneside	11	(25)	10	(33)	21	(28)
Northamptonshire	17	(39)	11	(37)	28	(38)
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>(100)</b>

There were few differences in terms of age and gender between the Jobs First and comparison groups. However, overall men were over-represented. Over three quarters of the Jobs First group (79 percent) were men, and nearly three quarters of the comparison group (73 percent). The sample overall had over four in five (82 percent) people with learning disabilities recorded as White British ethnicity, with ten percent Indian and four percent from Black Caribbean ethnicities.

**Table 3 Gender and ethnicity by whether in Jobs First cohort or comparison group**

		Jobs First		Comparison Group		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	34	(79)	22	(73)	56	(77)
	Female	9	(21)	8	(27)	17	(23)
	Total	43	(100)	30	(100)	73	(100)
<b>Ethnicity</b>	White British	35	(80)	24	(86)	59	(82)
	Asian Indian	5	(11)	2	(7)	7	(10)
	Black Caribbean	2	(5)	1	(4)	3	(4)
	Any other Black background	1	(2)	1	(4)	2	(3)
	Asian Pakistani	1	(2)	0	(0)	1	(1)
	Total	44	(100)	28	(100)	72	(100)

Even from the small sample about whom we have received case records forms, there was a lot of missing data, particularly about level of learning disability. We are continuing to work with sites to improve the data we have received. There was some suggestion of differences between the Jobs First and comparison groups in relation to level of learning disability and risk, although none of these were significant at the 5 percent level. Higher percentages of the comparison group were given a 'moderate to severe' level of disability rating, (37 percent compared with 26 percent of the Jobs First cohort). The other people with learning disabilities in the Jobs First cohort and the comparison group were rated as having 'moderate' learning disabilities, meaning that to date no one thought of as having 'severe' learning disabilities has been selected to take part in the project. A higher percentage of the Jobs First cohort were thought to face moderate risk from others (as opposed to no risk) 49 percent compared with 27 percent).

**Table 4 Characteristics of Jobs First cohort and comparison group**

		Jobs First		Comparison Group		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Level of Learning Disability	Missing	3	(13)	3	(16)	6	(14)
	Moderate	14	(61)	9	(47)	23	(55)
	Moderate-severe	6	(26)	7	(37)	13	(31)
	Total	23	(100)	19	(100)	42	(100)
Risk from others	None	17	(52)	22	(73)	39	(62)
	Moderate	16	(49)	8	(27)	24	(38)
	Total	33	(100)	30	(100)	63	(100)
Risk to others	None	24	(73)	21	(70)	45	(71)
	Moderate	9	(27)	9	(30)	18	(29)



Total	33	(100)	30	(100)	63	(100)
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We also asked sites to provide information about ‘additional needs’ of people in the jobs First cohort and the comparison group. Overall, over half the Jobs First cohort, for whom we have this data (55 percent = 18/33) compared with under a third of the comparison group, for whom we have this data (32 percent = 8/25) had no additional needs, although this was not statistically significant, ( $\chi = 1.588$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ). As shown in Table 5, long term health problems and mental health problems were the most common additional needs.

**Table 5 Additional needs by whether in Jobs First cohort or comparison group**

Additional Needs	Jobs First		Comparison		Total	
	N	(percent)	N	(percent)	N	(percent)
Physical Disability, frailty	5	(33)	1	(6)	6	(19)
Hearing impairment			3	(18)	3	(9)
Visual impairment	2	(13)	4	(24)	6	(19)
Long term health condition	5	(33)	4	(25)	9	(28)
Mental health problems	3	(20)	6	(35)	9	(28)
Substance abuse			1	(6)	1	(3)
Vulnerable groups			6	(35)	6	(19)
Support needed with behaviour	1	(7)	3	(18)	4	(13)
Total	15	(100)	17	(100)	32	(100)

### Delay to implementation and the evaluation

All seven demonstration site projects have experienced a number of delays, which have had a knock on effect on the evaluation. Originally, all the cohorts were to have been selected by the end of September 2010, when the sites had planned ‘Better off in Work’ events. However, most sites had not selected a full cohort by the end of 2010 and several still do not have a full cohort at the time of writing. Three issues have generated a delay in implementation: changes in personnel in the sites; difficulties in care managers and senior managers signing off support plans that include supported employment and problems in identifying a comparison group and returning completed consent forms and case record data for both the Jobs First and Comparison Group.

Essex and Oldham experienced particular problems progressing the project, largely as a result of changes in personnel and senior management. Both of these sites put the project on hold for a period in the autumn of 2010. Partly this was due to the local authority spending cuts, announced in October 2010, which became directly linked to senior managers leaving and prevented project leads being identified. Both sites are still intending to take some part in the project, but, at the time of writing, what form this is to take is not clear.

One or two of the five sites that have remained active continuously over the lifetime of the project have also had difficulties with senior management support for the project. This has impacted on the ability to make changes at a strategic level and in signing off support plans. In some sites, social care workers and others have undertaken jobs focussed reviews with members of the Jobs First cohort, and developed support plans including supported employment services, which have not been signed off by care managers, team managers or senior managers. Two reasons have been suggested for this problem: a lack of commitment

to employment as a possible goal; or a belief that there is not enough good supported employment services available for people to buy with their personal budgets. The gap between signing up to take part in the project and anything happening has resulted in some people withdrawing from the project in at least two sites, again causing delays.

All sites have found it difficult to identify a comparison group who are interested in employment (which tended to be the criteria for the Jobs First cohort); who match the Jobs First cohort in other ways; and who would consent to share data with the evaluation team. We are currently exploring whether sites are willing to submit anonymised data on a comparison group, which would include less detailed data, but would make some kind of comparison feasible.

In addition, collecting the case record data has been problematic for most sites, simply in terms of being able to allocate staff time to this task, during a period of cut backs and uncertainty created by local authorities' responses to the cuts in their spending. Similarly, identifying staff who can obtain consent from the Jobs First cohort and comparison group has been difficult.

As a result we are only able to report on interviews with project leads and senior managers in the five 'active' sites. We intended to start interviews with people with learning disabilities, in the Jobs First cohort, in October. However, owing to the delays identified above, these interviews started in January 2011, consequently data collection and analysis have not been completed to a point where we can meaningfully report on these interviews.

### **Follow up phase**

Two forms of data will be collected at follow-up in summer 2011. A second round of interviews will be undertaken with people with learning disabilities and Jobs First Leads. We will develop a second round interview guide on the basis of the first round analysis. A second round of case record data will be collected about the cohort and the comparison group



## Part two: Findings

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Part Two describes the perspectives of Jobs First Leads, senior managers and three 'national leads'. It may at times be possible to identify individuals from their quotes, so we have kept direct quotations to a minimum, however their interviews have informed the development of the analysis. We will present perspectives on implementing the three main aspects of the Jobs First approach as we outlined it in the Introduction. Within each section, we will explore issues arising and different approaches used by the sites and the support provided by the Department of Health.

Each section will cover specific issues and barriers encountered over the implementation of Jobs First such as amending Resource Allocation Systems and working with other non social care funding streams. Also, the implementation pointed up the importance of broader issues such as housing or transport, which make it more difficult for people with learning disabilities to get jobs, these will be identified within the relevant sections.

However, some issues, relating to practice of supporting people with learning disabilities and working with employers are not covered fully in this report. We are undertaking interviews with adult social care and other staff involved in undertaking jobs focused reviews and support planning as well as job coaches in the next part of the evaluation. Consequently, we will address these issues more comprehensively in the final report. This interim report does not include the perspectives of people with learning disabilities, with whom we are currently undertaking a first round of interviews. The analysis of these, along with the second round, to be conducted towards the end of the evaluation will form a major part of the final report. However, it is useful to point out the experiences and views of Jobs First Leads, senior managers and national project lead and consultants, who have been involved in developing policy and practice locally.

This part of the report will cover the three main elements of Jobs First as outlined in Box 1 and described in more detail in the Introduction

### ***Box 1: Jobs First approach***

1. Prioritise employment goals over leisure and day services in reviews and assessments so that people consider 'Jobs First'. In addition, employment is to be considered when major life changes, such as housing, are being discussed.
2. Develop the use of personal budgets to purchase supported employment services, which in turn will require some development of employment services and their workforces.
3. Explore the feasibility of 'braiding' funding from different sources to fund employment support for people with learning disabilities.

## Chapter 3 Contextual factors

A number of factors were mentioned by participants about the context against which Jobs First needs to be viewed. The period over which Jobs First has been operating has been a difficult one financially and a turbulent one for central and local government. It has spanned a general election, resulting in a change of central government, which has instigated significant cuts in spending, particularly on local authorities, who are facing up to 35 percent cuts in funding over the next four years. This has resulted in much uncertainty in the Jobs First sites, particularly over senior management support for the project, and some sites have found it hard to identify a project lead, or they are under threat of being made redundant at the end of March 2011. This comment was typical of the kinds of effects that this has had on implementation:

We've had a lot of changes in the council and within adult services, so we've seen a lot of changes in terms of which people are actually involved and leading the project and coordinating it and so it's gone through periods where it may have felt a little bit disjointed.

Senior Manager 02

### ***Financial climate***

The wider financial situation, following the recession in 2009 has led to increases in unemployment, resulting in the perception that it is a bad time for people with learning disabilities to be seeking jobs. This has been noted by many participants as an additional barrier. One Jobs First Lead also noted that this perception, whatever the actual situation, inhibited staff from promoting paid employment for fear of raising expectations, which workers were very wary of doing:

I think that's a barrier, that people's perception that this is a bad time to get jobs and therefore, there is almost like, therefore they don't have a right to a job, to get a job, do you know what I mean? People [who don't have learning disabilities] need to get them first. I think that's a potential barrier.

Jobs First Lead 07

That [perception of difficulty in getting jobs] is going to be... an additional barrier for everybody and for people's reluctance to get into the employment route at the moment, because people hate disappointment for people with learning disabilities...not being able to meet those expectations.

Jobs First Lead 06

The cuts are described as likely to affect managers' willingness to support new ways of doing things and ability to think or work across organisational boundaries, notwithstanding the long term benefits of such approaches. Furthermore, one Jobs First Lead queried, if cuts to services have to be made at a time of local elections, how is supporting people into employment going to be viewed by elected members if carers are not committed to disinvestment in traditional day services in favour of investing in supported employment services?

Adult social care we have 35 percent savings to make over the next three years. It's

going to be a similar picture across the council. I think we also have local elections coming up. The decisions that the elected members will be willing to take in the face of what may upset their constituents. Say, for example, closing more day centres and getting people into employment when you've got carers who may oppose that.

Jobs First Lead 04

At a time of financial cutbacks, one Jobs First Lead noted that encouraging other council departments to employ people with learning disabilities had become more difficult as recruitment had been stopped. This Jobs First Lead described how efforts had been made to communicate to other departments the benefits of employing people with learning disabilities, which had initially been very well received:

But unfortunately not many months after that came the sort of, we are not sure what's going to happen financially and everybody put a stop on employing other people.

Jobs First Lead 07

Similarly collaborative arrangements with other organisations are likely to be affected, at least in the short term, although unfortunately for Jobs First this is a key time for the project and one Jobs First Lead identified a concrete impact of the cuts that was likely to restrict a possible long term benefit from the project:

It would have been good had....[the two workers involved in Jobs focused reviews] at the end of doing the Jobs First were to then transfer to Jobs Centre Plus and be part of that network, then that might make that a better service for customers with a learning disability. But the reality is because of increasingly diminishing budgets we'd be unlikely to fund that or to fund it for very long.

Jobs First Lead 07

### ***Progress with personalisation***

The proportions of people with learning disabilities on personal budgets will be a valuable progress measure for localities implementing the Jobs First approach. Slow progress was identified as a barrier, whereas having a good base of people using personal budgets was seen as a facilitating factor to implementing Jobs First:

...we already had well established expectations around personal budgets...and when we put the application together for Jobs First I felt we were in a strong position, because we already had quite a lot of personal budget users.

Jobs First Lead 01

## ***Impact of other Valuing Employment Now [VEN] and Office of Disability Issues [ODI] projects***

Involvement with other VEN projects, particularly Getting a Life, and with Right to Control, a wider ODI initiative, was widely felt to be of great value in implementing Jobs First. Several aspects can be identified. First in terms of encouraging sites to bid; second, teams working on these other projects were often similar to the groups needed to implement Jobs First; third, being a local site on other projects with allied aims provided more routes to influence senior managers; and finally, specific initiatives developed for other projects were of direct value for Jobs First. This Jobs First Lead described bidding for Jobs First was a natural development from being a Getting a life site because of the overlap of aims, which meant that a project team of relevant people were already working together:

We became aware of the first programme through the Getting a Life project. We just felt it fitted naturally to thinking about work pathways...And also we already had an existing project team for Getting a Life. We felt we had enough local knowledge and expertise to bring to the programme.

Jobs First Lead 01

Having another national project was felt to help make changes within local authorities, through other mechanisms and boards, which overlapped in terms of personnel and aims:

We did have a sticking point around having indicative budgets early in transition for people leaving school and having enough planning time. We raised that through the Personalisation Board as a sticking point for this programme and also the Getting a Life programme and it was taken up to the programme board and an agreement was taken there by the Adult Social Care Director to make that a policy decision on the allocation of indicative budget at 16 years of age.

Jobs First Lead 01

Finally, being a site for other national projects often meant that practice initiatives were being tried that Jobs First could 'piggy back' on, making the maximum value out of the thinking and work that had already been done:

**INTERVIEWER** Will Jobs First be doing any additional work with employers or will it sort of be piggy backing on existing relationships and the Project Search relationship?

**JOBS FIRST LEAD** I think for the moment it will, because there is so much going on in terms of the different projects that we are involved in. At the moment I think it will be very much piggy backing onto everything else that's happening.

Jobs First Lead 04

## Chapter 4 Promoting Employability of people with learning disabilities

Changing attitudes of people with learning disabilities, practitioners and senior managers in social care and other agencies was a key part of implementing Jobs First. This chapter described the kinds of attitude change that was identified and outlines the kinds of approaches that have been used.

### ***Attitudes towards employment***

A key element to making the move towards prioritising employment services is attitudes to the employability of people with learning disabilities. Many participants identified a lack of belief that people with learning disabilities could and should work, particularly that they are able to work for more than 16 hours a week. Participants linked this to generally low expectations about the skills and abilities of people with learning disabilities within services and sometimes amongst families and people with learning disabilities themselves, which were identified as particular barriers to employment. These attitudinal factors were thought by many as underpinning other barriers identified:

It's getting people to the 16 hours bit. I think in Site there is a lot more kind of understanding and awareness around people working. Not sure people have quite got their heads around the fact that people could be working full time.

Jobs First Lead 08

**INTERVIEWER** Any factors that make it harder to engage people with learning disabilities in terms of offering employment?

**JOBS FIRST LEAD** People have fairly low expectation around employment. It's not really within their experience. You are often having to really have a much broader, longer conversations early on around ideas and options. Employment can feel like something that's quite worrying.. At the start people feel worried about their own capability. Will I be able to do this? Will I get the sack if I have problems in the job?

Jobs First Lead 01

A commonly held explanation was that services had been over protective and that employment represented a move away from this 'risk-averse' attitude. However, the idea of risk that underpinned some of the fears about encouraging people with learning disabilities to work was reversed by some participants who felt that the quality of life experienced by many people using traditional day services had been poor and indeed that they had been at risk of harm in continuing to offer these kinds of services:

It depends how you identify risk. The biggest risk has been that we haven't managed to give people good lives. But that's not been seen as a risk. We've just kept people safe and going over their everyday lives and that's not classed as a risk

Jobs First Lead 06

Several Jobs First Leads pointed to contradictions in attitudes towards people with learning disabilities working, often quoting the example of day service users who have worked in kitchens, or cleaning, which has not been seen as work:



Clearly there are some people who are still of a mind that this group of people can't work. Despite the fact we've got people who have spent years under the heading of a day service who have worked in catering for 20 years. Oh no, they couldn't get a job.

Jobs First Lead 07

### ***People with learning disabilities and their families***

There was general agreement that most people with learning disabilities, especially younger people, want to work and feel this is possible. Families and carers were less unconditionally positive and had a number of concerns (see section on 'Establishing employment as a goal'), which were thought by Jobs First Leads to be possible to address. Participants in Getting a Life sites were clearer about this, although responses in this vein within this line came from people in other sites too:

We are seeing with young people they talk about work all the time. They don't talk about going to a day centre. The natural thought is, I want to go out and be able to do this and I will do it.

Jobs First Lead 05

How long people with learning disabilities had been using other kinds of service was identified as a factor in their overall attitude to employment. People who had been in a day service for many years were thought to be more difficult to engage in the idea of seeking paid employment.

I think the majority of... people with learning disabilities are probably aged between 30 and 45, so they are people who have been in day centres for many, many years who are quite happy there, with their friends there, etc. That's a challenge in terms of moving people's thinking.

Jobs First Lead 04

Wider cultural beliefs about disability and about the roles of women were sometimes perceived as creating barriers to employment for people with learning disabilities. For example, some people in certain cultures believe it is less important for women to work than men, or even that it is inappropriate for them to be working outside the home. Two Jobs First Leads in different sites mentioned this issue as a barrier for some of the people with whom they worked. This is supported by research evidence (Beyer and Robinson, 2009) that lower proportions of women with learning disabilities compared with men with learning disabilities are employed. In the Jobs First and comparison cohort, women are also under represented:

I think there are certainly newer communities in the [Jobs First site] who probably aren't linked in with the day services world and some of those communities, if you were a woman, they wouldn't dream of suggesting you should be going to work anyway. Frankly, I remember a gentleman saying [this], very loudly at a meeting a little while ago ... and I was thinking we are causing problems by even talking about employment to them.

Jobs First Lead 08

Another Jobs First Lead made the point that people in some cultures may have a view of disability generally that made the idea of encouraging people with learning disabilities going out to work, and to integrate into mainstream society even more difficult to promote:

The cultural issue that I'm trying to avoid a little bit, but actually I think we need to talk about it ...there are certain cultures, ethnic cultures that will have a negative perception about someone with a disability anyway. The idea that that person is then going to go out to work is even more of a taboo.

Jobs First Lead 05

Living in families where everyone was expected to work was identified by several Jobs First Leads and a senior manager as important. One Jobs First Lead referred to 'worklessness' in the general population making it more difficult for people with learning disabilities to get jobs. If no close family members are working and have never worked, it becomes much harder to believe that it is possible for people with learning disabilities to work, again making the attitudinal change more difficult:

Worklessness is a big issue for [Jobs First site] where ... you've got generations of people that are out of work. Grandparents, parents and children that are out of work and we've got persons with learning disability that's the first one to get a job for years.

Jobs First Lead 05

### ***General public***

Wider public attitudes towards the ability of people with learning disabilities to work were also identified by a number of Jobs First Leads and senior managers as potentially impeding employment, through low expectations and also lack of awareness of how to support people as workers and colleagues. Specific work to overcome stigma and lack of understanding from the general public about people with learning disabilities was felt to be a crucial part of implementing Jobs First:

Lack of understanding by the general population who are not used to seeing and being with people with learning disabilities, who think they are the 'other'. They don't have that knowledge. Which is why we must do a lot of the [PR] work that we are trying to do... [Physically disabled people] are a very visible part of their local community and that's what we need to make sure happens with people with learning disability, so they are not this scary thing ...

Jobs First Lead 07

### ***Frontline practitioners (Care managers, social care and other workers)***

A strong view amongst many participants was that social care and other frontline practitioners such as Jobs Centre Plus Disability Employment Advisers were a key group to target in terms of changing attitudes. Their attitudes were felt to be pivotal in enabling people with learning disabilities (or discouraging them) to feel that they are able to work

and to think about getting paid jobs. Making sure that these practitioners understand how to start the process of seeking employment, knowledge and appropriate resources about where to go and whom to contact was identified as crucial:

The people who support them and listen, if the person [with learning disabilities] says they want to work then do they do something about making it happen? And often that's about all of those support staff not knowing how to do it, not knowing where to go to send the person or support the person to go. Does everyone need to go to the Job Centre or is it better if you go to that supported employment organisation, or is there a very simple picture, arrows, step one, this step two, do that, step three do that.

Jobs First Lead 08

There was a varied picture in terms of the initial reactions and attitudes of care managers, not only to promoting employment as a goal for people with learning disabilities but also to personalisation. Several Jobs First Leads spoke about the concerns that practitioners had in terms of starting conversations about employment with people with learning disabilities and their families. This was seen as a new and sensitive topic for care managers to raise, particularly in relation to family circumstances, as described below in the section on 'Establishing employment as a goal' for people with learning disabilities and their families:

Social workers can feel a bit anxious, because they are going to have to go to talk to families about employment and it might be the first time they have ever talked about employment with the families and the person themselves. It is quite a big thing to talk about ... People have actually come on a bit of a journey with this.

Jobs First Lead 01

A couple of participants noted that while Job Centre Plus had been positive about Jobs First at a managerial level, but questioned whether this message had been passed down to staff and whether staff were able and willing to work with people with learning disabilities. One thought that there was a need for more training for Job Centre Plus staff to work with people with learning disabilities:

Ideally ... Job Centre Plus should be the ones that are supporting people with learning disability to get a job and what we should be doing is ensuring that they have the skills and knowledge in order to do that.

Jobs First Lead 07

Details of any Jobs First engagement with Job Centre Plus and the perspectives of Job Centre Plus managers and front line staff will be included in the final evaluation report. Managing the concerns of staff was felt by several participants to be a key role for Jobs First Leads, in order to encourage workers to sell the idea of employment. Given the importance of the first reactions of families and people with learning disabilities, making sure that the staff involved in making the first approach is presented positively seen as crucial:

**INTERVIEWER** To using their personal budget to purchase employment support, how have the families reacted or are they reacting?

**SENIOR MANAGER** There has been a very positive response. I think it's about how

it's sold. We are doing work with our social care team to make sure that it's sold in a very positive way and that some of their concerns about personal budgets aren't transmitted to the client. That is a bit of a challenge, really.

Senior Manager 03

Unsurprisingly, frontline practitioners who are negative about the idea could be a powerful influence, discouraging a person to seek employment. In addition to social care workers, the expectations of some Job Centre Plus and Connexions staff were identified by Jobs First Leads and senior managers as presenting a barrier as they did not expect people with learning disabilities to work. Another senior manager felt that supported living services should be measured on how well they were supporting people to get jobs. Fears around changes to their own job roles as well as lack of ambition for people with learning disabilities were raised as factors affecting the attitudes of practitioners. Several Jobs First Leads suggested that some front line practitioners and providers were concerned about their futures, believing that if people became more skilled and got jobs, that this in turn would mean they were not needed and they would not have jobs, or be in business. This relates to the need, if employment services are to be commissioned, for staff and providers to adapt and develop new skills, as we describe below in the section on 'Who should work as job coaches?' Social care support workers in the following example felt that a person with learning disabilities was not able to move into a work situation, despite his clear desire to do so. While in the end the person was able to start working, the attitudes of care workers had made it more difficult:

I think for the care staff find that he wanted to work very hard to appreciate, I think, and feel that work was a real option for him and some workers felt the ambition a bit 'pie in the sky'. They felt it was just overly ambitious. The care staff worker was much more comfortable with keeping him safe and well and occupied.

Jobs First Lead 01

Promoting a belief in employability of people with learning disabilities was consequently a core implementation task for many of the Jobs First Leads, to ensure that the idea was embedded in the right places:

I think there is some work to do probably next around, because we know it's possible and we've got the market there and we know we can do it, it's then about taking people on the journey with us, really Hearts and Mind stuff is possible.

JF2 Jobs First Lead MS06

However one Jobs First Lead articulated the concern that the progress made during the project would not be sustained after it had finished, as there would be no one identified to continue pushing the agenda:

I do worry that people think that Jobs First is just a bit of a game that we're playing for a year.

Jobs First Lead 03

## ***Approaches to changing attitudes***

One National consultant commented that a shift in attitudes was needed so that families accepted the need for people with learning disabilities to 'have a responsibility to care for themselves and not to be looked after'. Jobs First was consistently described as a spur for sites to progress efforts at attitude change: For Ellen Atkinson, author of the report on costing supported employment services, changing attitudes was the most important aspect of Jobs First, which had to be sustained for there to be any lasting impact:

It's about a change in culture, and that's why I think Jobs First has such a lot of good things to come out of it, but the fact that it stops in March [2011] or the evaluation will take us up to September [2011] and so the work carries on through the summer. That culture shift has to continue.

Ellen Atkinson

For one Jobs First Lead, the difference made by a nationally endorsed project was that practitioners would approach people with learning disabilities on the basis of a belief in their employability, which would in turn generate a focus on paid work as a goal:

**INTERVIEWER** What is it that's going to be different for people in the Jobs First cohort?

**JOBS FIRST LEAD** There is going to be the belief that people can and should get paid employment and that this is a lifelong change rather than a bit of voluntary work to keep people occupied. So that should change the focus and because it will be done in an accepted way, it will encourage people's circles of support to get involved in that and be thinking along those lines. I think linking those things together will make some changes.

Jobs First Lead 07

The DH Lead also made the link between beliefs of people with learning disabilities, their families and practitioners in the feasibility and desirability of people with learning disabilities getting paid jobs as a pre-requisite to establishing this as a goal for an individual. She highlighted the importance of frontline practitioners in promoting this agenda. This was given as a reason for commissioning the 'Employability' training, which was an important part of the support provided by the DH to the sites.

This is what the 'Employability' training is for. It's trying to get the existing workforce clued up on this, so that, every time somebody has a personal centred review, there is somebody in the room who is saying, right, first and foremost, what are your employment goals and how can we achieve those? What support is out there for you?

DH Lead

The DH training (which mirrored some training that sites were already putting on) was well received by many participants; one Jobs First Lead felt that it would 'open many more doors for individuals' (JF3 JF Lead JH02). However, one Jobs First Lead questioned whether care managers would be able to go attend, because of the current staff shortages:

I would say care managers need to understand about employment. I don't think they

have the full knowledge. I guess the problem is, they don't have the capacity to go on the training and it's that chicken and egg stuff. They need to have a better understanding; the sort of training that we are supposed to get from Jobs First around for professionals I think will be really useful.

Jobs First Lead 07

Focusing on individuals' strengths rather than identifying what skills they do not have was a conceptual approach for many Jobs First Leads in terms of 'changing hearts and minds':

We need to recognise that people have got strengths and not just make them only do that, encourage people to develop the skills in other areas, but actually look at for all of us what strengths we've got. I think it's a different way of looking at people.

Jobs First Lead 07

For many participants, including the DH lead, hearing positive stories and examples illustrating the possibility and benefits of work for people with learning disabilities was the best means of changing these beliefs. Positive stories were believed to be useful in promoting the employability of people with learning disabilities to a wide group of professionals, to people with learning disabilities and their families, and to employers. Stories about the kinds of jobs people get and how individual's fears were overcome were given as examples. They were felt to be valuable in reassuring family members, encouraging people with learning disabilities and in securing the support of senior figures in the different agencies. This story illustrates one of the kinds of situations used, and the influence they were seen to have:

The young woman that's now working up here who has got a learning disability ... anyone coming through the door sees someone with a learning disability that's employed within directorate doing 25 hours a week and who is doing the same job as all the others; and she has a purpose and she has a function and a responsibility and she loves her job and she's learned it ten times quicker than anyone thought she would. She owns it. It just gives the right impression. We need more of that. We need family carers to be able to experience adults ...working and being seen at the same level as you or I and not as 'Ah, but that's a job for someone with a learning disability'.

Jobs First Lead 05

Such stories were felt by many participants to be much more powerful when related by people with learning disabilities or their families to a similar audience. For example, in one site, a mother was regularly asked to talk to different individuals and groups from a similar cultural background to tell the story of her daughter and all the fears she had had and the benefits that she had experienced.

We use her quite a lot, because she talks so well and so fluently and can talk very personally about how hard it was and what were her fears for her daughter and the difference that it's made for the family and the difference it's made for the income and the difference it's made on the wider family perception and the family perception over in India about what their daughter was and wasn't going to be able to do and now what she is doing. It just ripples out and out and out.

Another way that individual stories can be used is to present role models for young people with learning disabilities and to provide examples for family members to accept employment as a possibility. This can be seen as a key way to embed employment as a normal goal for growing up:

I think the biggest gap that we have is about seeing people out there that are actually in positive employment positions that some else can aspire to. When you and I were growing up, we had a myriad of role models that we could draw on whereas young people with learning disabilities don't have the peer to peer role modelling that we need.

Jobs First Lead 05

Working with people with learning disabilities and their families at a young age (one Jobs First Lead identified 25 as a critical age after which it became more difficult to develop confidence and skills for work) was generally felt to be the best approach, before people had started using traditional services:

We have still got some family carers with young people in college that are talking about 'Maybe he should go onto (welfare) benefits when he comes out of college', because it's a guaranteed income in this climate. They are still easier to nip in the bud and change the perception [than] of the older people that are stuck in a room.

Jobs First Lead 05

Several jobs First Leads mentioned families' feelings that other options were better and more appropriate as another reason not to want their relative to start seeking employment. One felt that there was lots of work to be done with families, which needed to be done at a reasonable pace so they were brought along with the idea as much as possible. Several Jobs First Leads gave accounts of parents or carers who had been very negative being persuaded that employment was a suitable goal for their relative, through some of the awareness raising activities undertaken in the sites:

We've seen a dad come along to Getting a Life event, huffing and puffing that he didn't know why he'd come and it would all be a complete and utter waste of time and we showed the Value Now In Employment film and we had two people say their stories. He went away just with a very changed view on what his daughter's life might be like in the future. That's key.

Jobs First Lead 08

Two participants stressed the importance of being measured on employment services and outcomes, as a means of encouraging organisations to commit to employment as a goal. Without this external pressure they felt that many local authority adult social care departments would not make the necessary changes and devote sufficient resources to develop good employment services. The coalition government plans to reduce the amount of data that councils are required to submit to national government as part of the localism drive (HMG 2010) and linked to the spending cuts announced in Autumn 2010 (Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, 2010). However, a measure for level of

employment of people with learning disabilities known to social services is included in the *Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework*, (DH, 2011). While this is not going to be reported nationally, it is likely that most councils will continue to collect this data and report on the figures as part of their local accountability statements. How and whether this will continue to be a driver for change in this area is unknown.

I do really think more direction or more compulsion and accounting from the government, because I think until things are made priority then there is always excuses for people not to do them. It's a sort of thing I'd want to see being asked through care quality inspections

Senior Manager 02



## Chapter 5 Prioritising employment as a goal for individuals and organisations

Once a belief in the employability of people with learning disabilities has been established, a key aim for Jobs First is for this concept to be translated into a practical reality, initially by becoming the central goal prioritised in person centred-planning and reviews, at the individual and organisational level. This includes using and adapting personalised approaches to purchasing supported employment.

### **Organisations**

The immediate Jobs First goal of changing individual practitioners' attitudes needs to be underpinned by addressing broader organisational priorities and targets through policies and strategies, in commissioning, and in local authorities' strategic working with other agencies. For example in one site, employment had been established as a goal for people with learning disabilities of all ages and is being built into a new strategy for redesigning community support services:

One of our priorities in commissioning is employment. And that's all around personalisation and it's all around getting people out of our services into living independently and being able to work and live and have a life and all of that, so it all interlinks.

Jobs First Lead 05

Connexions will be right for some people, but again, they are more of a 'pointing in the right direction' kind of organisation, rather than actually going in there and delivering. But it does work for some people and they are clearly a partner that we need to engage with because they will help change the culture.

Jobs First Lead 03

Other aspects of local policy are also important. Incorporating employment as a domain within the local Resource Allocation System (RAS), (which is discussed further in the section on 'Supported employment provision'), and ensuring that all reviews and support planning or care 'pathways', focus on employment are indications that a social care department has adopted this as a goal. Such changes to procedures were also identified as an important way of establishing employment as a goal across organisations. For example, signing off support plans is a key part of the process, representing the exercising of local authorities' duties of managing spending of public money and their duty of care towards people using services. One central requirement of all Jobs First sites was that support plans for the Jobs First cohort should not be signed off unless they had employment goals prioritised. It is interesting to note the tension here with experiences in other Jobs First sites of care managers and their managers being unhappy to sign off plans that *did* prioritise employment, because of fears about a lack of appropriate, good quality supported employment services locally. We explore this issue below, in the section on 'Supported employment provision'. For this Jobs First lead, decisions at organisational level could help to changed attitudes of individual practitioners as well:

Through a relationship that I had with the Transitions policy officer, we've managed to ensure that as of this year all the reviews will have a real employment focus, those

person centred reviews. Hopefully that will change that thinking.

Jobs First Lead 04

Having more people in employment was identified by two Jobs First Leads as part of a 'preventative' approach by local authorities, in the sense of preventing the need for social care services. In turn this could help make financial savings (echoing the perspective expressed in the *Vision for Adult Social Care*) by reducing long term funding of day services. This was seen to be a key element to persuade senior managers of the value of adopting it as a goal, using an 'invest to save' argument. While this is an example of broader developments outside Jobs First implementation, these changes are elements of an overarching strategy, within which Jobs First is a part:

That's the angle, it's prevention: stopping people coming into our services, because clearly we have huge efficiencies to make. Even though we are all very worried about what's going on here. It's a real tool to say, you know 'This is something we really have to buy into'. So it's a key driver within our commissioning strategy.

Jobs First Lead 04

Other organisational issues were identified that acted as a barrier to employment; making requisite changes to these issues would be a clear sign that adult social care departments had committed to employment as a goal. For example, where people are living in a residential care setting, local authorities usually take all but a small personal allowance from someone's income (from whatever source) to contribute towards residential care fees. This means that that people living in care homes and small group homes are unlikely to be 'better off in work'. There has been debate in the implementation meetings in the Jobs First sites about whether to spend time trying to address this directly or to focus more on helping people to move to supported living arrangements that increase the possibility of gaining financially from employment. Further, some supported housing settings were identified as making it more difficult for people with learning disabilities to get jobs, based on national Housing Benefit rules. Clearly these barriers to employment divide into local and national issues. Locally, there are charging policies and the ability to move people into supported living, about which changes can be implemented by local authorities. Nationally, issues such as Housing Benefit regulations can act as a barrier to people working as, as after earning £20 a week, Housing Benefit is reduced pound for pound. The Jobs First approach is not focussing on these issues directly, but the experience gained in highlighting and addressing barriers to employment and the attention given to the positive impact of employment may be a factor encouraging changes, particularly in terms of the local issues:

So in terms of residential care there is clearly changes to be made in the allocation of people and retaining [earnings] and our take is, 'Let's move people out of residential care. They shouldn't be there'. So we are looking to, over the next three years, with people in high level of residential care move into kind of high level supported living, and then tapering that down and the support is very much step down. In terms of supported living, again the things around housing benefit, etc, and how much people need to earn is clearly something that needs to be addressed, nationally.

Jobs First Lead 04

The sites were approached to bid for Jobs First partly because they had some recognised experience or achievement in supporting the employment of people with learning disabilities, which meant that they had already adopted employment as a goal to some extent. Many reported that employment had been becoming more important in their local authority over recent years, especially those were also implementing Getting a Life, Right to Control and Project Search, as we note above. Being part of any of these national Valuing Employment Now projects was felt to help keep employment on the agenda. However, all of the Jobs First Leads interviewed felt that Jobs First had helped to focus attention and generate energy to give some impetus to existing developments around employment for people with learning disabilities:

**INTERVIEWER** If you weren't a Jobs First site... how would that have made a difference to what you would have done with employment as an idea?

**JOBS FIRST LEAD** I think we still would have had to pursue this route and look at it and think about how we move that forward. I think what Jobs First has done is it has helped us focus and focus some energy on that and have some real examples. I think that really helps in terms of the discussions you have with directors

Jobs First Lead 01

The tight focus of Jobs First was identified as a benefit in promoting the adoption of employment as a goal within organisations as it prompted a concentration on specific elements of the wider system, which was helpful in making concrete changes locally:

What Jobs First is giving us is something very unique, because it's focused on adults and it's focused on personal budgets and it's focused on really only three blocks of funding stream that we have now got to try and braid together a personal budget: from social care, Work Choice now it's gone live, and potentially Access to Work if the person is eligible – so it's neat.

Jobs First Lead 05

Similarly, this same Jobs First Lead felt that the chance to work with a small cohort was a good opportunity to develop practice locally, which could then be spread amongst practitioners in the whole authority.

It's a small cohort so we can focus quite tidily on those. It's enabling our support planning and brokerage team to understand and kind of look at and think about and develop skills for helping to support someone to do their support planning around an employment outcome, as opposed to what they are currently doing, a social care outcome.

Jobs First Lead 05

### ***People with learning disabilities and their families***

Supportive families were felt by participants from all groups to be one of the most important elements in encouraging or discouraging people with learning disabilities to seek

paid work. For example, this Jobs First Lead focused first on family support when asked about the main factors that help people with learning disabilities to get jobs:

Family support is crucial. Family involvement actually, that's been really great here families have been very involved and maybe even used their own connections. It has been a very strong contribution.

Jobs First Lead 01

Jobs First was thought to promote the goal of employment for people with learning disabilities and their families successfully, by making the possibility immediate and long lasting:

It's causing [family] carers to think more blatantly about employment because the people that are going through it now are doing it. It's put employment on the agenda in a different way and it isn't just a nice thing that someone could do in the future.

Jobs First Lead 05

Several Jobs First Leads and senior managers identified families' and carers' fear of change as a big barrier to adopting employment as a goal. For example, concerns about losing long-established patterns of access to services, which could place an additional strain on the often complex arrangements for a family caring for a person with learning disabilities was one key aspect, particularly if people have been using services for some time. The fears were felt often to originate with families, although there was a strong perception that if workers took time with family members and explained the risks and benefits, most would be supportive of the idea. For example, one senior manager described the circumstances in which the family income is tied in with the welfare benefits received by the person with learning disabilities. This kind of situation created fears about losing the family income and therefore, in some situations, the support system for the person with learning disabilities:

What happens with family income and people concerned about the risks there, because people's income sort of is very much interwoven with the family income.

Senior Manager 02

One Jobs First Lead made specific reference to the ending of the '104 day rule', which meant that if you came off welfare benefits, you could go back on them at the same level within 104 days, providing reassurance for individuals and their families to experiment with coming off welfare benefits. Another Jobs First Lead described the approach that would be taken in this situation, indicating that people would retain their eligibility for support, on assessment, but would be helped to find another job rather than be directed at day services:

People will still be eligible for social care. If they came back to the local authority for example if they lost their job - we would then offer support following a needs assessment. There is a fear - I think - with families that if people get a job that they will no longer and in the future not be eligible for services.

Jobs First Lead 01

Current changes in benefit rules , particularly the different eligibility criteria for incapacity benefit, were also considered by two Jobs First Leads as potentially creating an external incentive to make people think about employment as a goal. Whether this likelihood was something to be consciously used as a tactic by social care staff is not clear. This quote also identifies the extent of change and uncertainty that will affect decisions about whether to seek work

I think that incapacity benefit claimants are being reviewed and either the reviewer will look agree that 'This person has a learning disability' and they will not be able to work or they 'I wonder if work is for them with support even though they have a learning disability'. All younger people coming through and leaving school will be going onto whatever (welfare) benefits there is going to be after April, which we think will be employment support allowance. I understand that this might be a little bit more work focused and that might help overall.

Jobs First Lead 01

Jobs First Leads stressed the importance of providing good information and reassurance to overcome some of the fears about retaining eligibility for services and the impact on welfare benefits. One talked about the need to emphasise the positive elements of employment at the same time as stressing the continued support that would be on offer:

What we have done is given reassurances that it is not about taking something away... It's more about creating opportunities where we can for people into paid into paid work, and for the benefit side of it our Welfare Rights team have joined forces with Job Centre Plus to be giving people 'Better off [in work]' calculations early on in the conversation.

Jobs First Lead 01

Other aspects of family circumstances and attitudes were felt to be important factors in supporting or discouraging people from working. For example, several Jobs First Leads mentioned the need in some families for a person with learning disabilities to be out of the house for certain periods, so that their family members can themselves work. This created barriers for people with learning disabilities in taking jobs for a few hours a week, if they need to have someone in the house with them when they are not working. All of these family concerns were important areas of discussion with individuals and their families:

People, mums and dads can have their working life based around that [caring role?]. If that suddenly changes and they are working in the evenings at Asda and they are there at home in the day and mums and dads might feel less able to work. It really is a whole family thing we need to talk about.

Jobs First Lead 08

### ***Practice issues***

Several Jobs First Leads were very positive about the degree to which a focus on employment was becoming embedded in local authority and wider public sector practice. Again, this is an example of facilitative work going on beyond the narrow definition of the implementation of Jobs First. Such changes in local authority practice generally will make it

harder for the evaluation of Jobs First to identify differences in the experiences of the Jobs First cohort and the comparison group:

Certainly, as I said, in terms of person centre reviews, employment is very much a focus of that now. In terms of support planning, again, employment has been built in there as a real focus. And that is certainly the message that we are saying to everybody is: 'This has to be a core element of planning'...

Jobs First Lead 04

However, a number of practice issues in terms of how to support people with learning disabilities into paid work were raised by participants. We will explore this aspect in more depth in the final evaluation report, which will include the analysis of interviews with adult social care staff and job coaches and second interviews with Jobs First Leads. However the issues raised by participants in the initial phase of interviews give a flavour of the focus of practice developments to date and the emerging understanding of the approaches needed.

Several participants noted that making a move into work may involve a big change in terms of an individual's day to day life. Having a job involves getting to work on time, dressing appropriately, following written and unwritten rules and understanding and reacting to instructions. Some of these skills and understandings may be difficult for people with learning disabilities; especially those have spent long periods in day services. Consequently, all of these issues will need to be addressed in job coaching:

It's a big shock I think also around [the] employment environment, in terms of time... getting up and getting to places on time.

Jobs First Lead 01

A small number of participants highlighted the importance of providing opportunities for maintaining existing friendships developed in services, again, especially for people who have been in services for a long time, for whom these represent their main if not only social relationships outside of their immediate families. This is particularly important in light of the mixed evidence about the benefits of employment in terms of social integration with non disabled colleagues:

He still sees some of those friendships he has as really important. We have to acknowledge that and say there is something about those connections that are important. We don't want to sort of disincentivise people by saying , once you've got a job then you lose other connections. We need to find ways of connecting people

Jobs First Lead 01

Getting and keeping a job may be more difficult for people with fluctuating conditions, because of worries about ill health. For one Jobs First Lead, self employment was identified as a good approach with this group, as it gave an opportunity to work very flexibly:

That is where self employment is good. You can mould that more around your own good days and bad days. Whereas with an employer relationship, you are going to have to turn up at set times etc. I think for people with fluctuating health issues, that can be really tough.

Several Jobs First Leads identified issues around the need for more intensive work to develop the understanding of people with complex needs about what employment is and could mean for them. Similarly, more work was thought to be needed with employers, who are likely to have fears about how people with complex needs can contribute meaningfully to the organisation, and at the same time a concern that that they might be exploiting people:

...for people with very, very complex needs and complex learning disabilities learning disabilities the challenge there is for them to understand a bit more about [employment], and for the employer I think to understand how they can contribute to a business or to a business setting in a way which is meaningful and not seen as exploitative...

Jobs First Lead 01

Working with employers is a key aspect of employment support practice. Again the Jobs First experience of this issue will be explored in more depth in the final report, but some useful points can be made at this stage. First, making it clear to employers that support is offered to people when they are working, was felt by one Jobs First Lead to be important in encouraging employers to start thinking that it would be a good idea to employ people with learning disabilities:

So once they understood that there was an offer of coaching and support [for the individual when in the workplace], they became much more interested and were saying very clearly that they could see that. They started to think about entry level jobs and things that could be possible, but also offering work experience and work trials and having working interviews.

Jobs First Lead 01

Several participants talked about the importance of taking advantage of local developments (eg large building projects) that are likely to involve a need for large scale recruitment. These provide an opportunity for frontline practitioners to advocate for employing people with learning disabilities. Perhaps more crucially, senior managers within the local authority need to identify means of influencing mainstream organisations managing such community projects to consider employing people with learning disabilities:

There is a whole new [shopping centre development] site. We have got big opportunities there for people and we need to take advantage of those.

Jobs First Lead 06

Despite some of the successful efforts by Jobs First local authorities to model the employment of people with learning disabilities [described below in the section on 'History of employment related support'], there was a commonly held view that public sector employers were *less* likely to employ people with learning disabilities than employers from other sectors. Mainly this was seen to be due to the increased regulation of employment in the public sector, which made it harder to ring-fence jobs or to vary application procedures

without contravening equal opportunities policies. Additionally, the recent funding cuts had stopped recruitment, as noted in the section on the 'Financial climate'. This senior manager described problems in encouraging different public sector employers to employ people with learning disabilities because of changes in organisational structure and personnel:

We were looking at as well trying to do a similar public sector approach ... with the health service, locally. That has proved difficult given the changes that they are going through and which personnel aren't around [i.e. changes to management structures meaning key managers tend to be moving on].

Senior Manager 02

### ***Personalised approaches to employment-related support***

Using personal budgets to purchase supported employment services is the second defining element of the Jobs First Approach we outlined above. As the DH Lead noted, the ideal position would be that:

...we get to a point where employment was completely embedded in personalisation programmes within each of the sites.

DH Lead

Using personal budgets was linked to a number of benefits and disadvantages which are outlined here, many of which are issues that have been identified in other studies about direct payments and personal budgets (eg Glendinning et al 2008), although some reflected the specific Jobs First topics.

### **Choice and flexibility**

Increasing choice and flexibility was identified by most participants as the most important benefit of using personal budgets and personalising services. This was felt by some to potentially increase the range of posts considered by people, to maximise the benefits of person-centred reviews. These have been found to be positive in terms of identifying goals and plans, which are easier to implement with personal budgets. This was felt would widen the group of people who could be supported into work. For example, this JF Lead commented that personalisation and personal budgets could be seen as a natural extension to person-centred planning, which she felt tended to be sidelined in everyday practice:

Again, it's going back to that other thing about person centred plans sitting almost as a satellite thing and not really impacting. Well if this is going to be the catalyst that makes those things happen then, yes.

Jobs First Lead 04

Being able to design more individualised and flexible support plans that prioritised employment was felt to offer the potential to support people with more severe learning disabilities and complex needs into employment, by two Jobs First Leads:

There was a whole group of people that were excluded: it is that... mild to moderate [group of people that can gain employment]. Anybody else would go down a path of leisure... If Jobs First hadn't come along, I don't think people would have realised



that that is feasible.

Jobs First Lead 03

### **Risks and protective factors**

Concerns were raised by many Jobs First Leads about the pressures that arise from managing personal budgets, particularly the stresses on people with learning disabilities and their families arising from employing workers to provide support, as well as risks of abuse or poor quality services. For example, in terms of quality of service, one senior manager was concerned about the potential that people would not know whether the supported employment service they were buying was likely to get them a job:

I don't want to see the market being regulated, but you could be purchasing employment related support that never results in a job. I think the controls need to be clear about what you are actually purchasing. How many hours of support would you expect to be able to get before you actually get a job? ...Are they trained in knowing what's the best way to approach employers and do they know the local employment market and have they [an] understanding of the types of jobs that you may be particularly interested in?

Senior Manager 02

Conversely, another view was that market forces would be a safeguard in terms of quality of supported employment, as people would be able to move providers if they were not getting a good service and that good quality services would get a reputation and would therefore become more successful:

And advantages I guess means that when an individual feels that they've had enough and they don't need that support any more they are much more in control about saying, 'That's enough, thank you', or if that job coach isn't right for them for whatever reason. It's much easier to be able to say, 'I don't want you to be doing that role any more' when you are handling the purse strings.

Jobs First Lead 07

The DH VEN team produced guidelines about Job Coach standards (DH,2011), which set out what people should be looking for in a good job coach. These were 'primarily aimed at supported employment practitioners and commissioners to ensure that more people with significant impairments get and keep jobs' (DH 2011:1).

One Jobs First Lead made the point that only services with which the authority had a contract were monitored for quality. Another senior manager felt that they had put in place systems to address risk in setting up and monitoring support plans. Furthermore, while the Jobs First Lead acknowledged that anyone using employment support could be at risk of exploitation, people who were purchasing their own support were in a more 'empowered position' to manage these risks (a point echoed by a further Jobs First Lead):

I think we have got the checks in place that should cover that. It shouldn't be inherently more risky than any other approach. It depends on what your approach is to personalisation. Anybody, whether through a personal budget approach or otherwise, if they get to be in employment the potential is there for exploitation or

abuse. If the approach you take is as a purchaser of your support then I think our argument would be that that puts you in a more empowered position....

Senior Manager 01

A further concern, arising specifically from Jobs First, related to the impact of prioritising employment over meeting the other needs of an individual, particularly personal care needs which are likely to continue even if people start working. One concern was that people may end up with other needs that are not met. This relates to the practical and conceptual novelty of using funding from social care for employment and making sure that a range of needs are addressed. It highlights the uncertainty participants expressed about the appropriate ways of using social care funds (see section on 'Double or co funding', below for more exploration of the use of funding streams):

If I've got a personal budget and I prioritise employment and I spend so much on employment and I've only got so much left for personal care. Actually, I need more for personal care which means I've got less for employment. I think families do worry and people themselves worry about that kind of prioritising.

Jobs First Lead 01

Finally, there was one overarching concern raised about personalisation, which has also been discussed in the research literature on personalisation (Stevens et al, 2011). A Jobs First Lead expressed the concern that individualising services might mean a loss of collective voice acting to improve services in the future. While this is a more general point about personalisation, rather than specifically about Jobs First, it is important to be aware that these ideas are being debated by personnel in the sites:

I have a concern about individual budgets per se, that funding, the more you individualise everything, which is fantastic in lots of ways, [but] perhaps the less power people have as a collective to challenge any barriers ...I'm thinking longer term when everything starts to be broken down to individuals. We haven't achieved the right things for people spending huge amounts of money in big contracts and large organisations ... It's right that we start to individualise. I'm just worried that where does this end? When we are all individuals, where is the collective power if we come up against any problems?

Jobs First Lead 06

## Chapter 6 Supported employment provision

The success of using personal budgets to purchase employment related support depends on there being a sufficient provision of good quality services to create a choice. Some care managers in Jobs First sites were reported to be unhappy to sign off care plans that focused on supported employment because of the current absence of sufficient good quality provision, potentially leaving people without support. This section outlines the issues emerging in sites' efforts to develop more provision and the specific issue of costing supported employment, which was identified as a barrier to funding and providing supported employment services.

### ***History of employment related support services***

Jobs First was seen to build on existing developments within localities to promote employment for people with learning disabilities. Several Jobs First Leads reported that employment had been adopted as a goal over the past few years, and had underpinned efforts to modernise day services:

Definitely, the emphasis is on redirecting money from day services into employment. So either those projects themselves become employment focused projects or they begin to draw staff away to employment related roles.

Jobs First Lead 06

Many participants described specific efforts to increase employment for people with learning disabilities that started before Jobs First. For example, one senior manager described employment related training that had been delivered to many staff working with people with learning disabilities, not just people who were specifically going to work as job coaches. In a couple of sites, a set of local authority posts had been targeted at people with learning disabilities, following negotiations with Human Resources to make sure employment law and regulations were followed. This had met with some success; one site reported that 16 people had been employed over a two year period. In several other sites, in-house and independent sector services had developed offering employment related support to people with learning disabilities, and some to a wider population, including people with mental health problems and ex offenders. However, some of the initial in-house services had developed on a sheltered employment model (eg horticultural projects), which was felt now by the participants from these sites to be inappropriate and in one site the service had been closed:

What we found was that it started to become a big day centre and people weren't moving on. We were getting in contract work from various organisations in the city. Packing window scrapers and packing catalogues, etc. People were getting a nominal fee a day for doing it. They were happy with that. It didn't sit right. It just wasn't right. They weren't 'working', so they weren't getting the minimum wage.

Jobs First Lead 04

### ***Commissioning new services***

Understanding what represents good quality supported employment is essential to being able to commission good services. Two Jobs First Leads stressed the importance of a flexible

approach by services, which need to identify what people are able to do and to help them get some quick work experience so that momentum is created. This was felt to be successful for tapping into an individual's enthusiasm and providing them with positive experience to go on their CVs for future job hunting. However, one of these Jobs First Leads also emphasised the value of having time to think through what people want:

Once people have started I think it's saying, 'Right, let's get started'. Even a small step on a pathway to get things moving. I think that's been a real positive. I think also the opportunity for the person themselves to have time to really, really think broadly about their ambitions. It's one thing sort of saying, 'I'd like to work', but it's another thing about what you want to do...They are starting there with a view about what I *can* do, rather than what I can't do and I haven't done.

Jobs First Lead 01

Jobs First is addressing an important interdependency issue in relation to the local supply and demand of supported employment. As we outline above in the section on 'Establishing employment as a goal for individuals and organisations', care managers were sometimes reluctant to sign off support plans with employment support at their core, because they felt there were insufficient good quality supported employment services for people with learning disabilities. In turn, participants reported that it is difficult for providers to offer services because of a perceived lack of customers/clients with signed off support plans and personal budgets to pay for them, creating a real barrier to investment in new supported employment provision.

While there were some signs of providers showing interest in developing new supported employment services, at the time of the interviews it was still too early for Jobs First teams to have any significant success in this area. Most sites reported a shortage of supported employment services and job coaches. Ensuring an adequate choice in supported employment provision was seen by many participants as being crucial to realising the maximum benefit from using personal budgets to fund employment related support.

The disadvantages are that the marketplace might not be developed enough for you to have the choice.

DH Lead

If we have a market and people have a choice, that will help, because people will be able to look at options that best suit them, given that people are at different points in terms of where they are and the work pathway and what would be best for them. I think that's the strength over the existing block contracted or in-house system.

Jobs First Lead 01

Jobs First was felt to offer an opportunity to develop specialist provision for people with more severe learning disabilities, who are eligible for publicly funded adult social care services. This group had often not been supported by existing employment services, whether in-house or independent, who had tended to focus on people with lower levels of learning disability. It was expected by participants from all groups that new employment support providers would be in the independent sector, both commercial and 'not for profit',

although there was also a general acceptance that in-house services would be needed for some time to come. In Herefordshire a social enterprise, Mi-Enterprise, which supports people with learning disabilities to start up micro-businesses, was supported by the local authority, who seconded a member of staff in the first instance to facilitate its development. Mi-Enterprise is setting up provision in three other Jobs First sites, and this represents a concrete benefit from Jobs First and an increase in the diversity of supported employment provision. In the remaining Jobs First sites work is also being developed to promote and support the option of self employment, sponsored by DH.

In terms of commissioning good quality supported employment services, one site had developed framework agreements for supported employment providers, which cover issues of quality and cost. Signing up to these agreements gives providers the authority's 'stamp' of approval and the Jobs First Lead saw this as an important underpinning service for people with learning disabilities who want to use their personal budgets for supported employment services:

We set up a framework agreement with them...which sets out...arrangements with them around quality of service, type of services and cost, which sits in contracts, and basically people who are purchasing through their personal budget have this framework agreement behind them in terms of price, quality and product.

Jobs First Lead 01

However, several Jobs First Leads pointed to the difficulty providers were having in developing a suitable business model, due both to uncertainty over how to cost the service, and because of fears about fluctuating demand. This last point was considered much more challenging because block contracts made it easier to predict an organisation's income on a regular basis. This is a widespread issue faced by social care providers as they try to adapt their businesses to personal budgets, as the IBSEN evaluation identified (Glendinning et al 2008).

It's an early business position, personal budgets, because supported employment has only just started coming through on support plans. And also, once people have the choice, there is the risk for the provider in terms of sustaining themselves in the market...

Jobs First Lead 01

### ***Costing supported employment services***

Knowing the likely costs of good employment support will be essential in order to ensure that employment support is given adequate funding through adult social care Resource Allocation Systems. Having a good estimate for the cost of employment related support will help balance the allocation of resources to employment and other social care needs. For example, this Jobs First Lead was aware of the need for this intelligence and was making efforts to understand the difficult balances involved in allocating resources for employment support over personal care and other needs, which was identified as a concern above in the section on 'Risk and protective factors':

If the resource allocation for some reason is set a bit low and there is problems around people being able to afford what's on the market, or the market costs are

too high, we will need to analyse this as we go through. At the moment, it's anecdotal views I hear: in relation to not having enough money in the budget.

Jobs First Lead 01

As the DH Lead commented, costing supported employment and identifying how to pay for it, which is explored in the next section, became key issues for Jobs First:

People didn't know how to price employment support that could be funded with Individual Budgets. People didn't know how to draw down funding streams to pay for somebody's support. They didn't know how they were going to reshape their service so that people could buy support with their budget.

DH Lead

The importance of this problem led the DH to commission a report (Allott and Atkinson, 2011) that suggested a figure of £24 an hour for the cost of employment services and an overall average cost of £9000 in the first year to support someone with learning disabilities to get a job, with an average further cost of £2000 to support them afterwards. However, the report makes it clear that the figures have been estimated using a small sample. Furthermore, the report also suggested that some elements of the work currently undertaken by supported employment providers may need to be separately funded, (ie not funded by individuals' use of personal budgets). Indeed, the assumption used in the report, that job coaches would have 90 percent contact time with their clients/customers, has been questioned by supported employment agencies:

I've been talking to colleagues who run services who say that there is just no way that is realistic. Most would say around 60% is what you should expect in terms of client contact time.

BASE Chief Executive

### ***Who should be a job coach?***

There was some debate over about whether social care support workers can become job coaches without extra training. There were one or two stories where workers were not supportive of people's goals to get jobs, undermining their enthusiasm or not committing to support people to do training or other activities related to getting jobs, although this may be an issue of attitude rather than training:

Whereas the care teams, it [seeking employment] was less important, they just cancelled things and didn't see it as a really a priority. They sort of said, 'Oh well, we can't get there on time'

Jobs First Lead 01

We note above that there was a belief that it would be harder for older service users to start thinking about employment as a goal. In a similar way, it was thought, by several participants, that many longstanding day service staff would find it difficult to learn the new skills and to commit to the necessary refocusing on employment over care and leisure activities:

It's difficult even with our day services, culturally: if you have been used to doing one thing for 15 or 20 years and it's been about care and support and also about leisure and training kind of support, to ask people to get this whole new skill set very quickly and be committed to that, and 'I am getting people into employment', I'm not sure we can recycle people and skills in existing services to quickly meet the need for employment supports or whether we need a new set of skills and people in this role'

Jobs First Lead 01

However, there were also cases where day services staff had been successfully retrained, often receiving Training in Systematic Instruction (TSI), which was generally felt to be essential for people to become good job coaches. In one site day service staff had been given this kind of training and had worked as job coaches within day services. The DH provided this kind of training in four sites (including Essex, which has not taken full part in the project to date - April 2011) and two more paid for the training themselves, which was reported by sites as well received. This raises the question about how much choice people will have in using their personal budgets to purchase supported employment services and jobs coaches, including providers who have not received the training or who do not work for a recognised employment support company. Many participants were of the view that personal budgets should not be spent on such unregulated services:

If the providers are unregulated then we would need to make sure that service users in making the choice have thought about safety etc. before we sign off the support plan, as the local authority has responsibility .

Jobs First Lead 01

## Chapter 7 Funding employment related support

How to fund employment related support, the support needed by people with learning disabilities to get and keep paid jobs, was a central question for Jobs First. This could include money for specific supported employment services such as a job coaches, as well as money to buy equipment, appropriate clothes, or to travel to and from the employment service or interviews while looking for a job. This section will give accounts of issues encountered when trying to incorporate employment into social care Resource Allocation Systems [RAS] and explore the use of other funding streams. This is a core goal of the Jobs First project and raises important questions about the extent to which different funding streams can be used to fund the same services and outcomes for people with learning disabilities. There is an allied debate about who should be the lead agencies for supporting employment for people with learning disabilities. It relates to issues of 'silo' thinking, in which staff and managers focus on departmental or organisational objectives to the detriment of promoting possibilities for collaboration with other departments or organisations to achieve the common goal of promoting the quality of life of an individual (for example). The argument is that such thinking can be ultimately self defeating as focusing on wider shared goals can simultaneously facilitate progress towards specific departmental or organisational objectives.

### ***Incorporating supported employment into Resource Allocation Systems (RAS)***

Developing RASs, which translate assessments of need into indicative social care budgets, has been a central feature of implementing personalisation. As we note in the section on 'Establishing employment as a goal for individuals and organisations', incorporating employment support into RAS, is one indication that the goal has been adopted by the organisation, or at least that employment support is seen as a legitimate use of public social care funds (a FACS eligible need). However, specific amounts allocated for supported employment were often very low. One Jobs First lead quoted £54 a week on average, which would buy just over two hours a week of supported employment, according to costings by Susan Allott and Ellen Atkinson (Allott and Atkinson, 2011), which suggest £24 as an hourly rate. As one Jobs Lead noted, employment could not be allowed to outweigh central personal care and hygiene needs, particularly at a time when basic budgets were being cut:

You couldn't expect someone to go without certain basic hygiene and support needs in favour of getting a job...This cruel hard callous reality [is] that actually that may not be as easily done as said, because we can't afford to be giving people huge amounts of packages of support when actually our core funding for social care is dropping at the rate of knots.

Jobs First Lead 05

Such dilemmas support the need for the co-funding approach to funding employment support that Jobs First promotes, suggesting that social care funding for employment support would never be sufficient to fund all of the support that people need. Several sites were struggling with this issue, with some contradictory views about whether employment support was FACS eligible at all, and some had not attempted to make changes to include it in their RAS. Others had decided to allow people to use their social care resources allocated for social inclusion or other day support for employment support, if this was an outcome they had identified:



If your outcome is to find yourself in paid work, eventually and also you need support at home for that particular issue. You would expect to see a support plan which reflects that. The amount of money [would be] proportionate [to the level of] need in each area. Rather than saying, you can only take this much, at the moment.

Jobs First Lead 01

Making sure that sufficient money is allocated to supported employment within the RAS may be seen as a critical factor in long term approaches by sites to promote the employment of people with learning disabilities. However, the DH Lead made the point that changing the RAS was a large endeavour, which could take too much time and make it very hard to make progress in the other areas for the specific period of Jobs First implementation. She was not advocating sites prioritised this as part of the project, although certainly felt there was learning to come out of Jobs First that could inform such developments. Three sites confirmed that plans were being made to include employment as a domain on their RAS, although in all of these sites this was not to be completed until after the end of the Jobs First project. One senior manager noted that having employment as a distinct domain would mean that employment costs would not be included as part of the allocation for social inclusion. It is possible that this would reduce flexibility in allowing funding to be used for different purposes. The extent to which the jobs First cohorts are able to use money flexibly will be a good test of how well the pursuit of employment is being incorporated into social care thinking and spend.

### ***Accessing non adult social care funding***

Exploring how to access non adult social care funding streams in order to draw these into a single 'braided' budget to pay for supported employment is one of the key objectives of Jobs First. As outlined in the Introduction, a number of funding streams are being explored. At the point of the interviews with Jobs First Leads and senior managers, some progress had been made with regards to accessing different funding, although the general view was that it was not possible yet to draw these into a single individual budget to pay for supported employment. One Jobs First lead described the possibility as 'brokered' as opposed to 'braided' budgets, meaning that someone would need to identify which funding streams an individual was eligible for, make the appropriate applications and manage the process of accessing the different funds:

We haven't got one budget; I don't think we've even got... braided budgets, but [what] we have got is brokered budgets.

Jobs First Lead 01

Some sites were of the view that their Jobs First cohort would only be able to access adult social care funding in the first instance

**JOBS FIRST LEAD** At this stage we only have one funding stream, so it's not braided, it's just social care...

**INTERVIEWER** But by the end of Jobs First will you have been trying to pull other areas in?

**JOBS FIRST LEAD** Certainly Work Choice, that's the obvious and as soon as that

is available we will utilise it and Access to Work, we need more clarification on... I think it's just [the Department for Work and Pensions] DWP and Access to Work not being 100% clear.

Jobs First Lead 05

The difficulty of accessing other funding streams was partly because they tended to be tied up in services (Work Choice) or colleges (Additional Learning Support for learners under 25), or because different sets of eligibility criteria and assessments had to be met before money could be accessed. One site reported problems with people with learning disabilities being told they were not eligible for Work Choice. This meant they were not able to use their 'Right to Control' and take the Work Choice support as a cash payment. However, another felt that only social care funds were going to be accessed, but talked about plans to bring in the other funding streams at the point where social care funding was due to run out, as Right to Control progressed locally.

Access to Work was identified as a more flexible source of funding, although there were reports of conflicting advice about whether and how it was going to be part of Resource Allocation, how the employers' contributions were going to be built into the budget and about what kinds of support it could be used for. This related specifically to whether it could be used to support people as they are trying to get a job, particularly on job trials. To be eligible for Access to Work it is usually required that people are working at least 16 hours a week, or are applying to work for this amount of time, as with Work Choice. Furthermore, there were different experiences of how Access to Work could be used, for example, whether it could be used for employment support workers. How strictly these conditions were being applied varied across the sites and this created some confusion:

What we've found is that for Work Choice, Access to Work, at the moment, we are not really seeing those funds until people start to tip up to the 16 hours. Under 16 hours, generally employment support is funded by social care.

Jobs First Lead 01

Interestingly [the local supported employment service] said that they'd only been able to use it for equipment to support people. They thought we'd either made it up or that [employment support company] were making it up or something. I've been told by the regional Access to Work person that definitely, she sent me her presentation on using that pot of money and she was very clear that it can be used for employment support workers.

Jobs First Lead 07

Developing approaches to integrating funding is a central part of Right to Control's remit and participating sites have tended to leave active negotiations with the different funding agencies to the Right to Control project team. Our final report of the evaluation will include interviews with Right to Control Leads, which will cover the nature of their involvement. There was general agreement that this was the best way to manage such negotiations, however, it did mean that because of the delayed start to Right to Control, Jobs First progress on accessing different funding streams had been delayed:

...that's for Right to Control and that whole thing about looking at all the elements of

funding that people receive. We've not got it yet in terms of Jobs First. But because those conversations are happening within Right to Control, it will be easier to look at that.

Jobs First Lead 04

One Jobs First Lead made the point that the Department for Work and Pensions [DWP] had tended to make block contracts with providers, in relation particularly to Work Choice, making it impossible to access resources to braid into an Individual Budget. Clearly Right to Control will be important in overcoming this, if it comes fully on stream.

So while [for] social care, the new government is ... talking about more personal budgets: everyone will have one by year whatever, and yet the DWP world is this long contracts, block funded stuff with providers. I don't quite know how that is going to work going forwards. If the DWP world doesn't change and that really is, isn't it, that is where employment sits.

Jobs First Lead 08

Where it was felt to be possible for people to access multiple funding streams, two Jobs First Leads indicated that a lot of the details had yet to be worked out, in relation to how specific plans for spending had to be, and how the balance of funding from the different streams would be worked out:

It is going to be confusing, I think, when these other streams of funding become available, for getting some balance of how it's spent...is the allocation the full amount, and as I say the double funding...social care can only play an element of that allocation now and the rest of it is made up by any other funding streams that are identified.

Jobs First Lead 06

Ellen Atkinson, the co-author of the funding paper commissioned by DH (Allott and Atkinson, 2011), identified that the cost of supporting an individual into employment was likely to amount to £11,000 on average and that social care funding should be used to top up the funds that might be available from other sources such as the £2k from Right to Control or the £4k from Remploy. She also identified that more work had to be done to enable the funding streams to be brought together to fund different elements of the support required for someone to get and keep a job. She felt that this would make better use of the available funding:

We have opportunities to use things like the funding from DWP if we can look at it being used more effectively. There is no reason why the amount of money that goes to DWP couldn't be used more efficiently for the cohort that we are talking about. The paper that I've written with [Susan Allott, DH lead]...outlines some of the funding that could be used. Additional Learning Support funding within education could be focused primarily on getting the learning outcome of getting someone into a job, but that has to be met when they reach the end of their learning goal, [when they will need to get] their funding from somewhere else, such as Access to Work.

Ellen Atkinson

She also promoted the idea that the funding streams could be used more flexibly, without abusing them, relating this to work she had carried out prior to Jobs First, which had increased social participation.

## **Co-funding**

The DH lead emphasised the point the Jobs First approach assumes that support for people with learning disabilities to get and keep jobs requires funding from multiple funding streams, as the cost of employment support is likely to be more than any one funding stream can meet.

We have got to get to a point where we align these funding streams and put them into a pooled budget.

DH Lead

This has often been characterised, as 'double funding' or paying for the same service twice, which is an example of 'silo' approaches by public sector departments or organisations, discussed under 'Funding employment related support' above. There were several examples where local RAS were reported to subtract an amount of money from the allocation of social care funds if other funding streams had been accessed, because it would be counted as meeting the need identified.

It could be that I want to work or the individual that we are working with wants to work and we know that they need maximum support every day to enable them to get into work. But then they are also going to be using Work Choice to also look at getting them into work, so the current resource allocation would then say, 'Well, if they are getting that support from Work Choice they don't need it within our social care allocation'.

Jobs First Lead 05

This Jobs First Lead also stressed that good support planners can distinguish different aspects of support to be paid for by the different funding streams, thereby avoiding the discounting. This was said to be a key target for Jobs First to address, although it was also felt by some that progress would be limited because of the short timescale of the project:

I can certainly see that what Jobs First is doing is actually challenging some of our current systems and making some of our professionals that haven't really thought about it before think differently.

Jobs First Lead 05

In a time of cutbacks in spending, it is likely to be difficult to persuade senior managers to view bringing together of funding streams as a positive co-funding approach (as opposed to wasteful double funding) because attention is focused on saving money within organisations. For example, there was some discussion by Jobs First leads about whether employment support was a legitimate way of using public social care funds at all, when other sources of funding for employment related support are available, despite the fact that this premise underpins the whole Jobs First approach. Another lead was clear that adult social care should not be the sole funding stream used for employment related support, which, in her view, should be funded at least partly from DWP resources. This view was

shared by a further Jobs First Lead, who felt that it would help care managers see that there was a clear pathway to employment that did not only rely on social care money:

I think if we can make Jobs First work for people and if we can attract in other sources of money, and I'm not saying that we shouldn't pay for anything, but if we can attract some other resources like we've already clearly got the £4,000, so that colleagues in care management can see that there is a pathway.

Jobs First Lead 07

However, two senior managers made more political points questioning the wisdom of trying to increase social care support for supported employment (as opposed to support from other funding streams) in the current financial climate, as it is not within narrowly defined 'core care needs'. This was about the likelihood of lack of management support within social care more than a debate about the nature and focus of social care. This illustrates the pressures that such managers are facing, which could undermine the Jobs First approach and could lead to negative decisions, whatever the evidence about the long term cost effectiveness for local authorities of paying for supported employment:

I think the potential disadvantages are that it could be left fragile in a climate of real financial pressures. The different departments could be saying, 'Well, why are we using social care money which should only be about people's absolute core care needs to help people get a job? So even though people would know ultimately that it's going to be cost effective, people are planning financially at the moment very, very short term, because the pressure is on the budgets are so massive. I think, for me, that's the biggest disadvantage and whether it might make more sense to expand the employment related funding streams rather than expecting the social care to fund the employment, because I think it does open the floodgates to potential conflict between the different funding streams.

Senior Manager 02

There remains a substantive debate about which central government department and therefore local government agency should have lead responsibility for employment for people with learning disabilities. This comes under the remits of the DH, which has lead responsibility for people with learning disabilities, the Department for Education [DfE], which has responsibility for educating children and young people with learning disabilities and the DWP, which has employment as part of its core function.

Even within funding streams from the same government department some confusion was reported by participants. As we note in the Introduction, Work Choice has three modules. People can be eligible for Access to Work funding when they are going through the second and third modules of the Work Choice programme, when they are likely to be in paid work for 16 hours a week or more. However, how Access to Work and Work Choice could be combined to support the same person at the same time was confusing for some Jobs First Leads.

## Part three: Discussion and conclusion

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### ***Introduction***

As we described in the Introduction, this interim report has mainly focused on questions of the early phases of implementing Jobs First. At this interim stage we were hoping to be able to reflect on the early experiences of people with learning disabilities, but this has not proved possible because of the difficulties faced by the sites in implementing Jobs First in a period of turbulence. This discussion and conclusions section will therefore focus on the third main evaluation question:

What issues are raised in the implementation of the Jobs First approach?

Throughout we will highlight the dependencies and linkages between issues, because of the complexity of the changes needed. Sites needed to instigate changes to local policies, to work round structural issues such as housing, transport and benefit dependency and to promote a new idea to a disparate group of stakeholders (people with learning disabilities, their families, social care practitioners, senior managers, employers and the general public). Making these changes at a time when local authorities are facing significant cuts in expenditure, which have resulted in redundancies at different management levels and threats of redundancies for frontline practitioners, has been challenging for Jobs First Leads and others involved in the implementation. We will draw out the links between the changes needed for implementation, which has involve sites working at multiple levels. As McLaughlin notes, such complex policy implementation critically depends on ‘the response of the individual at the end of the line’ (McLaughlin, 2005: 60), which in this case is a front line practitioner, such as a care manager or social care worker, which emerged as a key group for change in the Findings section.

### ***Strategic and contextual issues***

There was broad agreement that being a Right to Control or Getting a Life site was very helpful in implementing Jobs First. Getting a Life was noted as helping change thinking and culture and it was envisaged that Right to Control would, when fully operational, help overcome some of the barriers faced in accessing multiple funding streams. This is unsurprising, given the complexity of the task, and the commonality of aims of these projects. However, we have no evidence at this stage about whether such beliefs will be translated to increased employment outcomes. This will be addressed in the final report although it might be hard to evidence, given the small sample sizes.

Sites are engaging with other agencies in terms of working to change attitudes and develop a common goal, particularly with mainstream employment organisations such as Job Centre Plus. Many of the Jobs First project group meetings are attended by representatives of these organisations, although there was some question about whether messages were percolating down to practitioner level (Disability Employment Advisers). Getting clear messages about the possible use of other non social care funding streams appears to be difficult. With the generally low levels of resources allocated specifically to employment from adult social care, the lack of awareness around how to combine funding could be a major barrier. While not mentioned a great deal by interviewees, clearly the REMPLOY offer of £4,000 per member

of Jobs First cohort in the non Right to Control sites will be very influential. How this affects outcomes will be a key theme for the second round of interviews and follow up data collection in summer 2011.

Changing attitudes has been a major part of the early implementation. Training on employability has been provided for practitioners and managers by DH. This is part of the wider aim to embed the idea of employment for people with learning disabilities at all levels. Part of the training has included positive stories, which have been used more widely to help change attitudes, especially when told by people with learning disabilities. Stories are seen as a way of showing that people with learning disabilities can and do work. This approach to attitude change has been found to be successful in other areas such as changing health behaviour (Hinyard and Kreuter, 2007), so appears to be a valuable approach.

As we noted above, practitioners are key targets for attitude change in order to implement policy change successfully. Much of the work has been directed at this group, although having senior managers in organisations committed to employment has emerged as equally important. This which may be a reflection of the relative autonomy of local government and local agencies from central government, which requires two levels of implementation. Local government represents an intermediary phase of implementation in terms of policies and procedures and messages given to frontline staff who, as Street Level Bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1980), have considerable discretion in terms of their approach to working with people with learning disabilities, which emphasises their importance in the success of a policy development such as Jobs First.

Most of the people in the Jobs First cohorts and comparison groups do not have complex needs. We asked sites to indicate on a three point scale whether participants had 'Moderate, Moderate to Severe' or 'Severe' learning disabilities; none were described as having 'Severe' learning disabilities on this scale. However it important to remember that all participants are eligible for adult social care in terms of FACS criteria, which identifies them as having Moderate to Severe learning disabilities. Consequently, this means that the sample on whom we have data have tended to be slightly more able.

Many of the sites asked for volunteers, or chose people who had expressed an interest in employment. While there has been evidence from the United States of success in supporting people with severe learning disabilities and complex needs, this has not been the case in the UK (Weston, 2002) and this group has often been excluded from supported employment. Given the progress still to be made in selecting the cohort in some sites, it might be worth aiming to identify more people with severe learning disabilities and complex needs. The characteristics of the cohort selected at the moment means that the evaluation will focus on the impact for people with moderate to severe learning disabilities rather than the whole population of people with learning disabilities who meet FACS criteria for adult social care services.

The sample identified covers a good range of age and is diverse in terms of ethnicity, particularly reflecting the populations of Newham and Leicester. However, the gender imbalance, with four times as many men as women in the Jobs First group, is interesting. There is evidence in the literature that proportionately more men with learning disabilities

are in employment. Reasons for the selection of the cohort, particularly in terms of gender will be explored in the second round of interviews with Jobs First Leads, but again, it might be worth aiming to identify more women for inclusion.

### ***Practice issues***

Much of the discussion of practice was about plans to refocus on employment, as it was too early to have tested out many practice changes. What seemed clear was that practice changes needed to be facilitated by local changes, changing policies particularly for residential services, for example, and in terms of resource allocations. A clear message from senior managers that employment was a legitimate goal for social care was also important. The idea that anyone who loses a job would automatically get support to find another job, indicates that sites (or at least Jobs First leads) are contemplating an ongoing shift in the focus of social care.

It was also too soon to address the possibility of reductions in support and social care funding as people become settled in jobs but it was clear that sites were using the idea that long term support would decrease as people were in jobs for the longer term as a means of promoting employment within the organisations. Furthermore, some of the assumptions made in Atkinson's report (2011) involve a reduction in job coaching support after a year.

In addition to the employability training mentioned above, the DH and sites have put on Training in Systematic Instruction (TSI) for people who are going to work directly as job coaches. This kind of training has been found to be crucial in developing good job coaching (Beyer and Robinson, 2009) Such training has been well received and appears to be another pre-requisite to increasing supply of supported employment provision and the overall goal of promoting employment with people with learning disabilities.

Coming off and getting back onto welfare benefits was identified as a major fear for families. While there was a belief that such fears can be addressed, the actual experiences of people will be very important in the overall success of the project. This will be a focus for the interviews with families and carers as well as the second round interviews with people with learning disabilities and Jobs First Leads.

Addressing housing needs was another reflection of the complexity of implementing Jobs First. There was awareness about the need to consider employment when making decisions about housing, and an aim for practice to reflect this. Given the concerns of families who need to have respite during the day so they can work, establishing housing solutions that enable people with learning disabilities to work and still be better off is crucial to making sustainable increases in the numbers of people with learning disabilities who are in work. However, developing good housing solutions for people with learning disabilities is an ongoing problem; most people with learning disabilities live with parents long into adulthood and many others have little choice over whom they live with (Emerson and Hatton, 2008).

It was too soon to identify the most effective means of engaging employers. Weston (2002) reports evidence that employers are interested in employing people with learning disabilities, but that they lack information. In this study, participants also perceived that many employers would be receptive to the idea of employing people with learning



disabilities. The importance of reassuring employers that people with learning disabilities would be supported in the workplace, suggests too that employers lack information. This could require action at a national level to promote employment of people with learning disabilities with employers, as one participant suggested. Notwithstanding the engagement with employers, employers' need for support places more importance on the need to make sure that there is a sufficient supply of supported employment provision and that people have sufficient resources to buy a good quality service that meets their individual needs. Weston (2002) suggests that good information from supported employment agencies about the support they offer employers, as well as people with learning disabilities, and putting employers in touch with others who have employed people with learning disabilities may be good strategies to engage employers. Again this identifies how developments need to be progressed in parallel to working with individuals seeking employment.

### ***Funding and providing supported employment***

How to reflect employment support in adult social care Resource Allocation raised several interesting questions. First, where sites had managed to establish employment as a clearly identified area requiring support, this gave employment a particular status and was a public indication that employment support was a legitimate use of social care funds. However, as one participant put it, employment is a secondary goal for social care, as opposed to the more central goals of ensuring that people's personal care needs are met. In sites that had not identified employment specifically as part of the RAS, money identified for other needs, particularly issues of social inclusion, is being used for employment support.

One implication of this is the distinction between how an overall resource allocation is calculated and the degree of flexibility allowed in terms of how money is spent. One of the central goals of personalisation is that people are allowed to spend the money allocated for social care flexibly, in order to achieve outcomes they have identified. As Stevens et al (2011) point out, in the Individual Budgets pilots, there was similar discussion about the legitimacy of spending social care money on different kinds of services or goods. Sites in the Individual Budgets pilot varied on how flexible they were in how money was spent. If people with learning disabilities are given control over the use of the social care resources then it is less important how much is specifically allocated for employment. However the overall size of the budget is important; if there is little or nothing spare after meeting people's very basic care needs, flexibility in how it is spent is of much less value.

Even with a flexible use of social care funds, there is likely to be a shortfall between the amount of money allocated for social care and the money needed in the first few months of job seeking and early periods in work, when support needs to be concentrated. This implies the need for funding from different sources. Such an initial high level of support could be followed by an overall long term saving (Schneider, 2003; Beyer and Robinson, 2009). In order to achieve this, the various public sector organisations would need to accept joint responsibility for supporting people with learning disabilities to get paid jobs. However, as was noted by participants, the current financial climate in the public sector makes such inter-sector cooperation more difficult, as immediate pressures on budgets mean that arguments of 'invest to save' carry less weight.

Having enough supported employment provision available was identified as another prerequisite to increasing employment of people with learning disabilities. Without good

provision of services, there is no benefit from having a personal budget. Lack of local provision was thought to be inhibiting care managers from signing off employment focussed support plans, which in turn created more uncertainty about demand, inhibiting providers from setting up or expanding supported employment services. This links to the question raised by a couple of participants about the extent to which service purchasing can be completely individualised and the need for some block funding. Maintaining some supported employment services through block contracts or in house, may be necessary in order to ensure an uninterrupted supply of service. Independent providers are having to develop new employment services at the same time as working to new business models to work with personal budgets. Consequently, providers may move in and out of the market at first, making for an uncertain supply for people to purchase.

The extent to which a new workforce is required for this work is yet to be determined and views varied about the ease with which social care workers can be trained to work as job coaches. There was some sense in which different skills and characteristics were required for this kind of work, compared with traditional social care. Again, this is speculation on the part of participants. The second round of interviews with Jobs First leads and the interviews with Job Coaches and adult social care staff will explore what kind of workers are starting to emerge.

## ***Conclusion***

It is obviously too early to draw any firm conclusions about Jobs First as a whole. It is important, however to stress that sites have managed to implement changes and to get started on selecting and working with a cohort of people for Jobs First at a time of unprecedented difficulties for local authorities. It is also important to note that some of the selected Jobs First sites had been moving in the direction of increased focus on employment for some years. Jobs First already appears to have been a useful spur to reinforce and reinvigorate staff to develop new approaches, particularly to pilot the use of personal budgets, which is a new approach to purchasing supported employment services.

Changing attitudes and structures have emerged as the most important themes over the early implementation phase of the project. Sites have worked to change attitudes about the abilities and desires of people with learning disabilities to work, and also to address some of the barriers in terms of impact on families, accessing multiple funding streams and the availability of employment services. However sites are in the midst of working with key groups such as care managers to translate some of the attitudinal changes into practice. Encouraging more provision of supported employment has also proved challenging. Multiple changes appear to need to take place in order to successfully implement Jobs First, and implementation can be characterised as working on multiple fronts both within local authorities and across the locality.

In the follow up stage of the evaluation we will focus on outcomes of the Jobs First approach in terms of employment, and costs of services delivered. Interviews with people with learning disabilities and their families will provide insights into the experiences of seeking and getting jobs. Second round interviews with Jobs First Leads will focus on the outcomes of engagement with different organisations and employers and the degree of success at accessing multiple sources of funding.

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## Appendix: Site profiles

The information in the site profiles was obtained in April and May 2011

### **Site 1. Herefordshire**

#### **Region:**

West Midlands

#### **Type of authority**

Shire County

#### **Size of local population**

Total	Males	Females
179,122	87,681	91,441

#### **Population of people with learning disabilities known to local social services 540**

#### **Progress with personalisation**

- Long history of Direct Payments, but little take up by people with learning disabilities
- In Control Site
- 30% of people with learning disabilities on personal budgets, using a mixture of Direct Payments, usually managed by relatives and carers and individual service funds

#### **History of services for people with learning disabilities**

- In transition from traditional day services

#### **History of supported employment**

- Increasing development of employment and volunteering, people spending less time in day services
- Identified a gap in terms of supported employment services
- Several social enterprises are working the authority, offering paid work and training
- Self Employment organisation set up

#### **Other VEN/ODI projects**

- Getting a Life

#### **Site motivations for being in Jobs First**

- Fit with Getting a Life to develop a pathway
- Need to change the adult market to create better opportunities for work

#### **Jobs First Lead**

The Jobs First lead is also the Getting a Life lead, official title is 'Service Redesign Lead for Integrated Commissioning'. She is social work qualified and has a long history of work in learning disabilities and mental health services. She is three levels down from the director of adult social services in the structure.

## **Site 2. Leicester City**

### **Region**

East Midlands

### **Type of authority**

Unitary

### **Size of local population**

Total	Males	Females
304,722	150,539	154,183

### **Population of people with learning disabilities known to local social services**

960

### **Progress with personalisation**

Former Individual Budgets pilot site, now 30% of people with learning disabilities using personal budgets

### **History of services**

Renewal of Day service in 2006, involved closing large day services and a move to using community, with some continuation of traditional day services.

### **History of supported employment**

Awareness of the importance of employment was raised after a big consultation in 2006 with people with learning disabilities. Links with local community events also helped develop employment as a goal. Small in-house employment service, staffed with retrained say service workers was started after this point. Also the site has very good relationships with REMPLOY. Good universal services to support entry to employment because of relatively high levels of unemployment locally

### **Other VEN/ODI projects**

Right to Control; Project Search

### **Jobs First Lead**

Joint Jobs First leads: Two leads appointed. One manages the Partnership Board and has a long history of work with children with special needs. She is two levels beneath the Director in the structure. The other had been a regional lead on PSA 16 and former employment lead in the site, working on the Project Search programme: he has a long history of working with people with learning disabilities. He is four levels beneath the Director in the structure

### **Site 3. London Borough of Newham**

#### **Region**

London

#### **Type of authority**

London Borough

#### **Size of local population**

Total	Males	Females
241,212	122,936	118,276

#### **Population of people with learning disabilities known to local social services**

670

#### **Progress with personalisation**

Was a former In Control Site, on the second wave, 140 (26 percent) had a personal budget

#### **History of services**

The site has been moving away from traditional day services since the late 1990s, with an initial focus on closing down the large bases.

#### **History of supported employment**

Within the last couple of years, employment has become more of a priority for services, but progress has been slow in terms of getting many people into 'real jobs. There is an in-house employment service

#### **Other VEN/ODI projects**

Right to Control

#### **Jobs First Lead**

Group manager for people with learning disabilities. Manages the social work team, the health team, Community Involvement team, the transition team as well as the employment service and the employment project. Three levels beneath Director of Adult Social Services



## **Site 4. North Tyneside**

### **Region**

North East

### **Type of authority**

Metropolitan Borough

### **Size of local population**

Total	Males	Females
197,158	95,391	101,767

### **Population of people with learning disabilities known to local social services**

921

### **Progress with personalisation**

Some progress towards increasing the use of direct payments, but is currently developing a Resource Allocation System (RAS, which should be operational in April 2011.). However, 32 percent of the people with learning disabilities with a costed service have a personal budget

### **History of services**

Moved away from traditional adult training centres in 2004 towards a community based model. This was aimed at people with higher support needs at that point. People with more skills and more ability were encouraged to take on direct payments or personal support in a different way.

### **History of supported employment**

Some supported or sheltered employment services developing from day services, which offered work-like experiences (eg an organic farm and a café). In house employment service has been set up, but has had a period of change which has limited its ability to offer supported employment.

### **Other VEN/ODI projects**

Getting a Life

### **Jobs First Leads**

Two leads were initially identified at different levels in the authority. One is three levels below the director and manages the day service provision in the authority. The second was closer to frontline management. She managed the café which offers work like experience for people with learning disabilities – she is four levels below the Director and has a history in retail work. However, she left the authority at the end of March 2011 and has not been replaced.

## **Site 5. Northamptonshire**

**Region: East Midlands**

**Type of authority**

County

**Size of local population**

Total	Males	Females
683,791	338,962	344,829

**Population of people with learning disabilities known to local social services 1637 (18-65)**

**Progress with personalisation**

While the site was not an IB pilot, a local pilot was undertaken, and a RAS developed. Personal Budgets have been 'mainstreamed' since April 2010 – offered to all people as they are assessed and reviewed. April 2011 – 429 people with learning disabilities of working age, (26 percent) had a personal budget

**History of services**

Still has traditional day services, although started modernisation which has involved consultation with people with learning disabilities and their families. This resulted in the closure of several services, including some that offered work like experiences.

**History of supported employment**

Several of the day services incorporated work like environments for people with learning disabilities (eg a horticultural/conservation project). Has recently developed 'framework agreements' for two supported employment services. Has no specialist in-house employment service, although has an 'Employment and Disability Service'. Has also a local strategy for employment, which developed from a consultation with people with learning disabilities, which identified a desire to work. This came about just before Jobs First, but overlaps.

**Other VEN/ODI projects**

None –though is an associate site for Getting a Life

**Jobs First Leads:**

Two leads have been identified. One is on secondment to the Commissioning team from day services and has a long history working in day services for people with learning disabilities. She is four levels below the Director. The other line manages the first lead. She is a Commissioning manager and has worked in many social work fields, although not specifically in learning disability services.