

Peer Review: Preparation for Adulthood

Introduction and Purpose

On the 4th July, LIIA held its first peer review event for London LAs on the topic of Preparation for Adulthood and specifically Employment Pathways. The day was developed and managed with Jane Humphreys from LGA and Linda Jordan from National Development Team for Inclusion, working with Frank Offer and Vita Bax from LIIA. The event was organised to allow LAs to share learning about how best to help their young people with SEND prepare for adulthood and encourage LAs take action to improve their local offer with respect to preparing for adulthood. LAs were able to find similarities in the challenges they face in improving outcomes for young people with SEND and hear innovative new ideas from their peers to address these challenges. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and attendees left with a renewed sense of purpose, as well as an action plan for how best to make the specific changes they need to their offers to deliver better outcomes for young people.

Attendees

Attendees were drawn from the following boroughs:

- Barking and Dagenham
- Waltham Forest
- Achieving for Children (representing Kingston and Richmond)
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Redbridge
- Haringey

6 further boroughs expressed interest in attending the event and joined a waiting list for future events of this nature.

Structure of the Day

Before attending the event, each borough had to complete a detailed toolkit on Employment Pathways, created by Linda Jordan at the National Development Team for Inclusion. This toolkit asked LAs to record key information relating to the numbers of young people who are benefitting from pathways to paid employment, as well as score the quality of their services and how effective their programmes and activities are in promoting employment for their young people with ECHPs across their life course. The final part of the toolkit asked LAs to reflect on their three priority areas for action over the next year. This initial activity of completing the toolkit allowed LAs to begin the day already having a reasonably clear picture of their service and some key areas to focus on in discussions with their peers.

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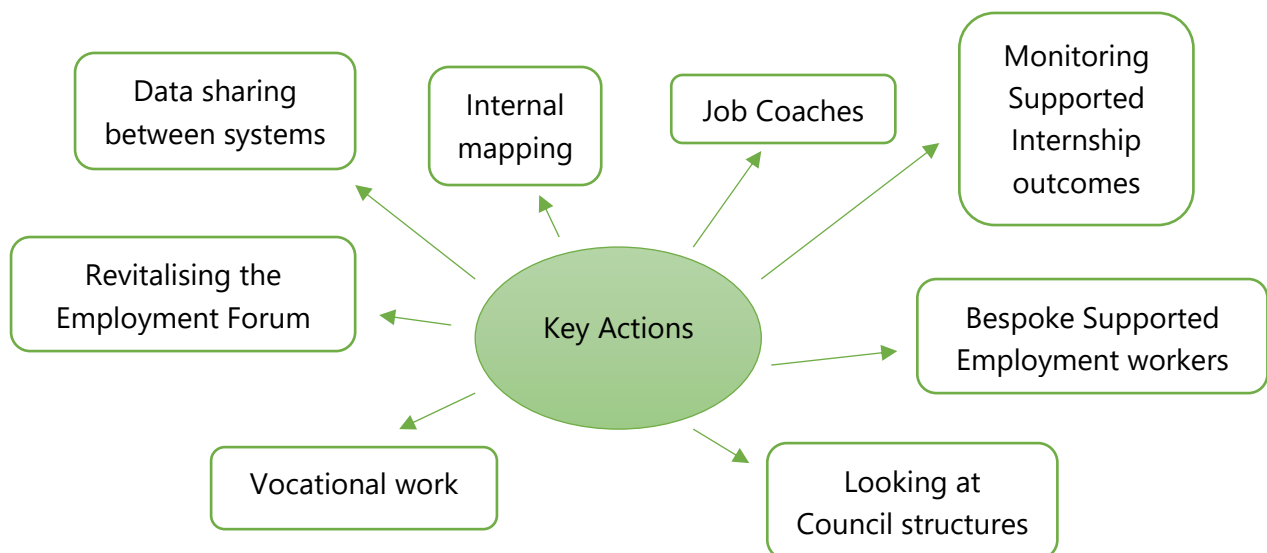
FEEDBACK: 7 out of the 8 people who fed back about the event reported that the toolkit was helpful to complete. Respondents reported that it took from 10 minutes to 1.5 hours for them to complete the toolkit, with most common answer being 30 minutes. Two respondents noted that they found the toolkit difficult to complete because the relevant information is not held by any one team, or at all. This suggests that there may be a key piece of learning around how to ensure that key individuals in all LAs have good self-knowledge about the services they are providing.

The day itself involved a variety of presentations on the concept of Peer Review, current regional aims for Preparation for Adulthood and the role of regional bodies in supporting LAs to develop their Preparation for Adulthood work.

LAs were partnered up and asked to jointly review their other's toolkits and provide honest feedback, focussing on strengths of each LA and areas where development was needed. LAs were then able to work together to create and refine key action points, using their peers' complementary strengths to impact their areas to develop. Finally, LAs were able to discuss as a group how they could be best supported regionally to make these improvements, and how they can increase buy-in from other partners and agencies to ensure their actions lead to the best outcomes for young people.

FEEDBACK: All 8 respondents agreed that the feedback they got from their partnered LA was helpful, and some particularly highlighted that hearing about similarities and differences between their LAs was useful in inspiring new ideas to improve their own offers.

FEEDBACK: Key ideas inspired by these peer conversations included work on job coaching, employment networks and accessibility of the local offer.



Key Actions which LAs will be taking forward.

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Key areas mentioned where LAs indicated they would appreciate regional support:

- Identifying and promoting good practice in networks with employers sub-regionally and/or regionally
- Increased ADASS involvement and wider partner engagement in future work.
- Support to help define expected involvement from health and other partners in Preparation for Adulthood work,
- Mapping Preparation for Adulthood sub-regional meetings with children's services, adults' services and employers.

Next Steps

- All respondents indicated that they would like to attend another event like this in the future, perhaps on other topics in SEND services. LIIA may also want to consider repeating this event for the 6 further LAs who initially expressed interest in this event but were not able to attend for reasons of space.
- Almost all respondents said they would prefer to attend more in person events, or a mixture of in person and online events.
- Discussion at the event itself indicated that this event could be improved by including colleagues from adults' services, social care, education and health. LIIA may want to consider how to engage colleagues in adults' services and other sectors in peer review events, either by widening the initial invite to other groups or by holding separate events with those colleagues to build relationships.

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