

## READING LEARNING DISABILITY PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE:



### PURPOSE AND ETHOS:

In March 2001 the Government published the White Paper  
*“Valuing People - a new strategy for Learning Disabilities for the 21<sup>st</sup> century”*

Valuing People sets out “how the Government will provide new opportunities for children and adults with learning disabilities and their families to live full and independent lives as part of their communities.”

Its 4 Key Principals are:

- Rights
- Independence
- Choice
- Inclusion

The Government revisited its learning disability strategy specifically in 2007 when it launched the *Valuing People Now*<sup>1</sup> consultation, leading to the publication of the final *Valuing People Now*<sup>2</sup> strategy (2009-

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health [2007] – *Valuing People Now; from progress to transformation – a consultation on the next three years of learning disability policy*

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health [2009] – *Valuing People Now: Anew Three-Year Strategy for people with learning disabilities*

2012) in January 2009. The original *Valuing People* values were affirmed, and the priority areas for future action were identified as:

- raising awareness;
- developing effective Partnership Boards;
- improvements in healthcare;
- increasing the range of housing options;
- embedding the personalisation agenda; and
- increasing employment opportunities.

The Reading Learning Disability Partnership vision is one of 'more integrated, inclusive and individualised services that will help people with learning disabilities have more choice and control about the support they receive'.

The Reading Learning Disability Partnership exists not just to bring together its members, but also to be the central point for developing a whole range of local partnerships. We aim to support people to access universal services wherever possible - for work, learning, leisure, health and housing - and believe that effective partnerships are the key to achieving social inclusion.

Central to our Partnership is the importance of developing personalised approaches. We aim to increase the choice and control people with learning disabilities have over the services they receive.

We want to make it simpler and easier for people to access both specialist and universal services. Our aspiration is that people with learning disabilities and their families in Reading feel confident that services are working together to enable them to have their needs met. We appreciate this might mean a lot of work for members of the Partnership to manage the complexity of different organisations and processes coming together.

Our most important partnerships are those with people with learning disabilities and their families. We aim to put people with learning disabilities at the centre of our work, striving to develop and spread understanding of what's important to them.

Our Partnership will be as broad as it needs to be to achieve the goals we have set ourselves. We expect members of the Partnership to commit time and energy to working together, and to overcoming any obstacles, which our separate organisational structures might seem to impose.

We will bring together partners from outside of health and social services so that their input can inform those partners who have commissioning responsibilities. We will aim to have representation from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors.

We will find ways to include the views of people with learning disabilities from different communities. We will have a person with a learning disability as co-chair of our Partnership and support him or her in that role. We will help all new members to understand who is involved and how the Partnership works.

We will meet regularly at venues that are physically accessible and welcoming to anyone who wants to attend. We will meet at times which allow people to participate. We will help people who come to our meetings by making information easy for everyone to understand. We will make sure that people know what we are doing by making information available through our website and newsletter, and holding regular open meetings.

In Reading there are 2 levels of the Learning Disability Partnership Board:

- The Learning Disability Partnership
- The Work Groups

### The Learning Disability Partnership:

#### Purpose:

- To lead on and implement the Valuing People Now Agenda.

- To bring together all the relevant agencies, organisations and individuals to actively participate in the planning and delivery of services to people with a Learning Disability.
- To achieve outcomes and changes that result in improved lives for people with learning disabilities.
- To develop, and implement, the national and local priorities in partnership.
- To remain aware of other services, their needs and their links with Learning Disability.
- To act as reference group for all stakeholders and provide information relating to national and international good practice.
- To ensure that the views of users, carers, potential users and other people with an interest in learning disability are fully taken into account in discussions, planning and reviews.
- To make the most of opportunities to plan and fund services together and share other skills and resources that we have.
- To ensure that the Learning Disability Development Fund grant is allocated appropriately to support local service developments.
- To report to appropriate service management boards about what services are needed, what changes need to happen and how money needs to be spent.

### Membership:

All relevant Agencies, Organisations and individuals (i.e. Key Stakeholders).

Members should include:

- Service users
- Family carers or carers
- Representatives from Social Services and Primary Care Trusts

- Representatives from Education, Transition, Housing and community development
- Representatives from leisure and transport services
- Independent providers
- Voluntary sector
- Advocacy services
- Employment services
- Representatives from ethnic and minority groups

Attendance either by direct invitation from the Partnership or an individual could ask to join and members of the Partnership will consider their request.

#### Frequency:

- Every 3 months.
- Regular information exchange by website, newsletter and workshop programme.

The Partnership will encourage effective involvement and participation of users and carers at all levels.

#### The Work Groups:

There are a number of Working Groups which support the Partnership. The Working Groups are made up of Board members and other people who need to be involved to ensure progress can be achieved. During the consultation on the draft Strategy, the Partnership reviewed the configuration of its Working Groups, and came to the conclusion that the best way to organise these going forward was around the following themes:

- Being as Healthy as We Can Be
- Enjoying the Community
- Where We Live
- Learning and Working
- The Staff Who Support Us

All of the groups are expected to ensure that:

- they promote and develop person centred approaches;
- their work reflects the needs of young people in transition as well as adults;
- they recognise the needs of the wider learning disabled population as well as those eligible for specialist support services;
- they consider the particular needs of those with complex needs or challenging behaviour, those from BME groups or newly arrived communities, people with autistic spectrum conditions, and those who have or are at risk of offending; and
- they have effective ways of involving users and carers.

Updated March 09