

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Employment Committee
Date: 27th June 2022
Report for: Information/Update
Report of: Ann-Marie Mohieddin – Interim Strategic Lead Adult Social Care

Report Title

Adult Social Care - Social Work Recruitment and Retention

Summary

This report summarises the main aspects of the work undertaken in Adult Social Care that explored the challenges faced by the directorate with regards to the recruitment and retention of social work practitioners.

It explains the proposed option for payment of a market supplement for social work practitioners whilst providing focus on retention of the staff we attract into our employment by way of supporting individuals to reach their career aspirations through the development of clear development pathways.

Recommendation(s)

That the content of this report is noted and the market supplement payment for the social work cohort is approved.

Background Papers: Adult Social Care- Social Work Recruitment and Retention paper March 2022

Implications:

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	This report aligns to the council's corporate priorities.
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	None
Financial	financial commitment of £229,678.00
Legal Implications	None
Equality/Diversity Implications	None
Sustainability Implications	None
Carbon Reduction	None
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	
Risk Management Implications	Not applicable

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Adult Social Care is currently experiencing challenges with regards to attracting and retaining qualified social workers with the directorate currently holding 19 vacancies across the system. Significant work has been completed by the directorate to understand the challenges faced in recruitment and several options have been explored to address the recruitment and retention issues.

1.2 As a result of the high level of vacancies, agency staff have been required to assist the directorate in discharging statutory duties and support with service delivery. Significant time and financial resources are being invested to recruit agency staff with a continually increasing hourly rates being required to source quality agency staff. Over the last 3 financial years adults has spent vast amounts of money on agency staff with a projected spend of over £550,000.00 in 21/22.

1.3 Rates of pay were explored across differing levels of social work within Trafford and examined against rates of pay across other local authorities within Greater Manchester. It is identified that Trafford's pay rates consistently place 6th out of 10 within GM.

1.4 Retention is an ongoing concern within the service with the number of vacancies present and it is acknowledged that financial reward is not the only area which is important to retain or attract staff. Areas of further development have been explored to support retention by way of exploring development of clear progression pathways for qualified staff.

2.0 Vacancies

2.1 Recruitment of qualified social workers is a difficulty faced in ASC and a theme which is also mirrored across Greater Manchester (GM) and nationally. Adult Social Care is facing significant challenges regarding the recruitment and retention of qualified social workers with 19 current vacancies. Whilst the teams are working hard to recruit permanent staff, these efforts have been arduous with concerns relating to the number and calibre of applicants; continually leaving substantial vacancies across the service. Vacancies continue to be advertised with some on numerous occasions (4 plus attempts) with applicants who do not meet criteria for shortlisting or no applicants at all.

3.0 Rates of Pay and Benefits

3.1 As part of this exercise the HR team have supported work in comparing the rates of pay across the 10 local authorities of GM, identifying where Trafford ranks with regards to rates of pay for level 2 and 3 Social Workers as well as Senior Practitioners. Whilst Trafford did not score consistently throughout, there is a substantial gap in the highest paying local authority compared to Trafford with us falling in 6th position for level 2 Social Workers. Below outlines Trafford's current rankings of pay across GM whilst offering alternative suggestions to support ASC in offering a more competitive rate.

Adults Social Worker L2

Adults L2 SW	SCP Min	SCP Max	Annual £	Annual £	Rank
Tameside	29	34	£32,910	£37,890	1
Wigan	29	34	£32,910	£37,890	1
Bolton	27	31	£31,346	£34,728	2
Bury	28	30	£32,234	£33,782	3
Manchester	26	30	£30,451	£33,782	4
Stockport	28	29	£32,234	£32,910	5
Salford	26	29	£30,451	£32,910	6
Trafford	26	29	£30,451	£32,910	6
Rochdale	25	29	£29,577	£32,910	7
Oldham	24	27	£28,672	£31,346	8

We are currently ranked 6th in the GM Locality. If we were to pay a flat rate of £872 for our Adult Social Workers, it would make us 3rd place in GM for adults social workers.

3rd place	Annual minimum including MS (£)	Annual maximum including MS (£)
	£31,323	£33,782

The market supplement policy states that the minimum difference is at least £1000.



Adults Social Worker L3

Adults L3 SW	SCP Min	SCP Max	Annual £	Annual £	Rank
Bolton	31	35	£34,728	£38,890	1
Manchester	31	35	£34,728	£38,890	1
Rochdale	30	34	£33,782	£37,890	2
Wigan	30	34	£33,782	£37,890	2
Tameside	29	34	£32,910	£37,890	3
Bury	31	33	£34,728	£36,922	4
Salford	30	33	£33,782	£36,922	5
Trafford	30	32	£33,782	£35,745	6
Oldham	28	32	£32,234	£35,745	7
Stockport	30	31	£33,782	£34,728	8

We are currently ranked 6th in the GM Locality. If we were to pay a flat rate of £2,145 for our Adult Social Workers, it would make us 3rd place in GM for adults social workers.

3rd place	Annual minimum including MS (£)	Annual maximum including MS (£)
	£35,927	£37,890



Senior Practitioner

Senior Prac	SCP Min	SCP Max	Annual £	Annual £	Rank
Oldham	36	40	£39,880	£43,857	1
Bury	39	40	£41,675	£42,683	2
Salford	36	39	£39,880	£42,821	3
Tameside	35	39	£38,890	£42,821	4
Bolton	35	39	£38,890	£42,821	4
Rochdale	34	38	£37,890	£41,881	5
Wigan	34	38	£37,890	£41,881	5
Trafford	33	36	£36,922	£39,880	6
Manchester	31	35	£34,728	£38,890	7
Stockport	29	34	£32,910	£37,890	8

We are currently ranked 6th in the GM Locality. If we were to pay a flat rate of £2,941 for our Senior Pracs, it would move us up to 3rd place in GM. If we were to pay a flat rate of £3,997 it would move us up to 1st place in GM.

3rd place	Annual minimum including MS (£)	Annual maximum including MS (£)
	£39,863	£42,821
1st place	Annual minimum including MS (£)	Annual maximum including MS (£)
	£40,919	£43,877



3.2 Approved Mental Health Practitioners (AMHP) and social workers, senior practitioners, and managers within mental health have been requested to be considered; with pay disparities being highlighted for Approved Mental Health Practitioners social workers across other local authorities. Trafford is one of only 3 local authorities which make additional payments to AMHPs for holding AMHP status. The table below identifies rates which have been provided by colleagues within mental health for AMHP pay.

Area	Pay	Allowances
Bolton	£34,728- £38,898	8% unsociable hours
Salford	£36,922 - £39,880	n/a
Manchester	£32,306 - £39,027	£2,000
Cheshire East	£33,799 - £39,683	n/a
Trafford	£33,782 - £35,745	£1,725

3.3 The refer a friend scheme has been recognised by the directorate as a way to assist recruitment. Referral schemes are proven to result in 36% of high performing staff compared to 11% when recruiting through internet websites. Data intelligence from an Adult Social Care staff survey informs us that 62% of the staff who engaged in the survey would recommend working for Trafford to their family and friends which with the implementation of refer a friend process there is a potential for staff to be more proactive in doing so. There is a current offer in Childrens Services of a £100 gift voucher which is to be matched within ASC.

3.4 The implementation of a relocation package is an additional way which has been agreed to be adopted with the aim of expanding our recruitment area. It is hoped that the reputation of the schools in Trafford and development of local areas this will be a selling point to potential staff. Currently Children's Services are offering a relocation package of up to £4K which Adult Social Care will match.

3.5 A review of parking arrangements for staff will be completed as the current part-time parking offer to staff within ASC require set days for those individuals within the scheme however, these days are required to be fixed to certain days each week. This

poses additional challenges to the teams, as whilst there is an opportunity for staff to make savings in their outgoings, it does not align to staffing requirements of providing duty cover. Further work is being considered to address this issue.

4.0 Retention

4.1 Retention of social workers has been an ongoing concern within Adult Social Care with a high number of vacancies within the service and a continued number of individuals choosing to leave Trafford. Staff are more likely to remain in a business' employ where there is an offer of training and development. The recent survey completed highlighted opportunities for development as individuals were asked if they saw a path to advance their career and whilst 32% responded agreeing they did, 20% disagreed. A review carried out of current practices and pathways it is felt there is room for improvement in the development of progression pathways beyond obtaining level 3 status.

4.2 Trafford Learning Academy has been set up to support the long-term stabilisation of the Adult Social Care workforce, encouraging staff into social work through the apprenticeship scheme. Whilst this should be celebrated, it does not address the immediate issues with regards to staff retention and it is proposed that establishing clear progression pathways as part of the Learning Academy would support in retaining the staff currently in post. Many social workers want to advance in their careers, whether that be in management or specialising in certain areas of practice such as being an Approved Mental Health Practitioner or Best Interest Assessors. Supporting staff to reach their goals and ambitions with clear progression pathways should increase retention and support in recruitment

4.3 As a result Adult Social Care are now embarking on the journey of developing these progression pathways.

5.0 Recruitment and Advertising

5.1 Currently all social care posts are advertised on Greater Jobs and whilst this is a well-known platform; all social work roles within GM are advertised within this arena with very limited numbers advertised by Adult Social Care elsewhere. It is therefore suggested that ASC use additional platforms for recruitment such as social care specific and national publications as well as social media.

5.2 Promoting not only the job roles and benefits available, but Trafford's unique selling points including the Learning Academy, Trafford's EPIC values and strategies through the use of social media cannot do anything but strengthen our public perception to potential recruits.

5.3 Development of an ASC recruitment drive will support this process with a service wide advertisements , promoting all current available roles with a spotlight not only on rates of pay but both Trafford and Adult Social Care's unique selling points. This will be written with all service managers and signed off and agreed with our communications department, who are the experts in the use social media. Whilst there will be some costs to these advertising strategies, if it is completed for the service in its entirety, spending will be reduced compared to each team advertising separately.

5.4 A working group of staff within Adult Social Care will be created with staff at all levels within the directorate to both develop and attend a recruitment events ;

6.0 Market Supplement Payments to Social Workers and Senior Practitioners

6.1 Social Work Pay has been considered. The pay for level 2 social workers in Trafford has explored with Trafford being 6th in GM with regards to the pay offered to this cohort of staff. Human resources have advised that with a market supplement of £872 without on-costs will take the rate of pay from 6th to 3rd within GM. This level of payment would increase the pay band to the rate of £31,323-£33,782, with 8.8 FTE current established level 2 posts in the service.

6.1.2 Pay for level 3 social workers is ranked at 6th in GM, a market supplement of £2,145, has been agreed to strengthen our position of level 3 pay to 3rd in GM. This increase in pay would bring pay rates to £35,927-£37,890 for 63.8 level 3 established posts within the service.

It is important to note that these above costs do not consider on-costs and that from budgeting purposes requests need to be completed for all posts at the top of band 8 to allow progression through the period of the requested market supplement to ensure negation of any possible overspends. Therefore, an agreement has been reached for 72.6 posts at the cost of £209,088.00.

6.2 Senior Practitioner pay has also been considered and a number of options explored. However, increasing the Senior Practitioner pay further than the agreed market supplement of £996 would further impact staffing budgets as an overlap in wages would occur, possibly creating hostility within the service. Therefore the solution of a market supplement being paid to senior practitioner at the rate of £996 has been agreed; which will stop any overlap in wages whilst also giving some recognition to market competition. With consideration of this rate with the 15.4 posts, the total cost to Adult Social Care implementing this rate is £20,590 including on costs.

6.3 Total cost of implementing market supplement payments for social workers and senior practitioners is £229,678.00 including on costs.

7.0 Union Engagement

7.1 Discussions have taken place with trade union representatives who have supported the proposal for payment of market supplement rates.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 Adult Social Care hope to embed the agreed changes with staff in July 2022.