

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Employment Committee
Date: 2nd September 2024
Report for: Information and approval
Report of: Director of HR

Report Title

Adult Social Care - Market Factor Supplement

Summary

This paper describes the current position in relation to the Market Factor Supplement payment that is paid to Adult's Social Workers and Senior Practitioners and sets out a proposal and rationale regarding the continuation of this payment.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Employment Committee:

1. Note and approve the recommendation to continue to pay the current Market Factor Supplement payments to the employees of Adult Social Care working in a social work role for a further 2 years until 30 June 2026 subject to a review after 12 months:
 - a. Band 7 Newly Qualified Social Worker
 - b. Band 8 Level 3 Social Worker
 - c. Band 9 Senior Practitioner
2. Note that Finance has confirmed that the cost of the proposed recommendation is within budget.
3. Approve the second consideration to appoint Band 10 Team Managers to the top salary scale point. As all positions are budgeted at the top of the banding this would not create any further budget pressures for the directorate.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Ann-Marie Mohieddin, Strategic & Neighbourhood Lead (Central/West)

Background Papers: None

Implications:

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	<i>One of Trafford Council's key priorities is to support people out of poverty by improving overall employment rate (aged 16-64) (%). Paying a market supplement payment and making the overall remuneration competitive and attractive will aid recruitment and retention of colleagues.</i>
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	<i>Not applicable The decision to pay a market factor supplement is a local decision.</i>
Financial	<i>There is an additional financial cost arising from the payment of a market factor supplement.</i>
Legal Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>
Equality/Diversity Implications	<i>An EIA was undertaken when the Market Factor Supplement payment was introduced. This will be reviewed and updated accordingly.</i>
Sustainability Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>
Carbon Reduction	<i>Not applicable</i>
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	<i>The intention of the Market Factor Supplement is to lessen recruitment and retention challenges</i>
Risk Management Implications	<i>There is a risk that if we do not extend the market forces supplement that in respect of remuneration we will not be competitive and we may face increased remuneration and retention challenges.</i>
Health and Safety Implications	<i>No applicable</i>

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In 2022 Adult Social Care (ASC) completed an exercise to explore the workforce and issues with regards to both recruitment and retention of staff: at the time having an unprecedented level of 20 plus social work vacancies. The exercise explored several areas which included rates of pay to social workers and Senior Practitioners in the directorate; resulting in the agreement of a market supplement being paid for 2 years (01 July 2022 to 30 June 2024,) with a review to be completed after this period.
- 1.2 The market supplement rates agreed in 2022 were pro rata for part time hours, as follows:
- Band 7 Newly Qualified Social Worker: £872 per annum
 - Band 8 Level 3 Qualified Social Worker: £2,145 per annum
 - Band 9 Senior Practitioner: £996 per annum
- 1.3 Whilst the initial paper in 2022 focused on several areas regarding recruitment and retention across ASC, this paper will concentrate on the review of the market supplement for Social Workers and Senior Practitioners, with additional consideration for Band 10 Team Managers.
- 1.4 Vacancies across Social Work staff is not unique to Trafford Council. At the time of the initial consideration of implementing a market supplement in 2022, Skills for Care had reported in the year of 2019/20 there were 22,000 vacancies across the sector. The recent Skills for Care report in October 2023; The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England, reported there was recruitment to 23,500 social work posts being filed in

2022/23, with 17,3000 being within the Local Authority (LA.) Overall, there continues to be a problem in vacant social work posts nationally.

Table 1- National Social Work Vacancy Rates

Year	Vacancy Rate
2016/17	10.7%
2020/21	7.6%
2021/22	9.4%
2022/23	11.4%

- 1.5 This paper will acknowledge ASC’s vacancy numbers within Social Work posts across the system, number of agency staff, and turnover. This information has been carefully considered to support with the determination of options and a suggested approach moving forward with regards to the social work and senior practitioner market supplement and band 10 Team Managers.
- 1.6 Thought has also been given to children services and market supplements for staff within the directorate. It is acknowledged that children services pay £2,400 to Band 8 and Band 9 staff within their directorate. Whilst these disparities have been considered, due to the above issue between Band 9 and Band 10 within ASC, it is not felt to be appropriate to mirror these arrangements.
- 1.7 Lastly, it is essential to acknowledge that support was required by colleagues within Human Resources (HR) and Finance who were collaborators of this paper; providing essential information to aid in the decision making.

2 Vacancies and Turnover

- 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. Currently within ASC there is a total of 10.5 FTE Social Work vacancies, 2 FTE Senior Practitioners, and 2 FTE Best Interest Assessors (BIAs,) with a further Social Worker expected to hand in their resignation.
- 2.2 Whilst there has been the implementation of rolling adverts for social work staff, which initially proved successful, there continues to be challenges with this due to vacancies being in specific areas of the service. Targeted adverts are now being used within these service areas and this process will continue to be under review.
- 2.3 Table 2 below demonstrates the vacancies by team and role within the assessment service of ASC at the time of writing the report.

Table 2 – Vacancies & Upcoming vacancies

Team	Vacancies	Upcoming Vacancies
Central CSWT	4 SW	1 SW
Complex Needs (LD)	0	0
North CSWT	0	0
Safeguarding Hub	0	0
South CSWT	0	0
Urgent Care/D2A	0	0
West CSWT	3 SW	0
Mental Health	3.5 SW 2 SNR PRAC	0
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	2 BIA	0

2.4 Turnover within the assessment service has been has greatly improved since the implementation of the market supplement in 2022.

2.5 Table 3 below demonstrates there being mostly improvements in turnover rates across roles apart from Senior Practitioners, excluding posts within Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH) teams. The most significant improvement identified being in turnover rates of Social Workers.

Table 3 - Turnover Rates Inclusive and Exclusive of GMMH

Year	Social Worker INC GMMH	SNR PRAC INC GMMH	Social Worker EXC GMMH	SNR PRAC EXC GMMH	Both INC GMMH	Both EXC GMMH
2020/2021	0%	0%	17.8%	20.51%	-	17.82%
2021/2022	34.48%	34.38%	32.72%	27.27%	34.48%	31.81%
2022/2023	27.52%	8.69%	23.70%	0%	21.51%	24%
2023/2024	8.57%	22.22%	8.77%	21.08%	10.84%	10.52%

2.6 Overall, there is clear evidence that since the implementation of the market supplement payment to staff that there has been a significant decrease in turnover rates. Whilst it is acknowledged the market supplement payment may not be the sole factor, there is a significant risk if its removed.

3 Agency Workers

3.1 ASC have become heavily dependent on agency social workers to support in delivering statutory requirements and although recruitment has been successful for several agency staff, this has proved a challenge for management teams, requiring a significant amount of resource for limited returns on efforts.

3.2 The process of recruiting agency staff is not only time intensive, but also has financial implications on the service. Service managers are spending a significant proportion of their time trying to recruit agency staff, an expensive resource when considering the number of hours dedicated by managers, in

addition to the actual staffing costs. It is essential for the service to minimise agency spend given the significant budget pressures the LA is facing.

- 3.3 Since the implementation of the market supplement there has been a reduction in agency spend within the assessment service, with the exception being within GMMH. Table 4 demonstrates agency spend within the assessment service both inclusive and exclusive of GMMH.

Table 4- Agency Spend

YEAR	LA Assessment Service	GMMH Spend
2022/2023	£684,506.31	£120,468.65
2023/2024	£435,976.51	£151,204.94

- 3.4 It is essential to note that there are differing challenges within GMMH than that of those within assessment service staff within the LA. Whilst Social Workers and Senior Practitioners are deployed into GMMH by the LA under Section 75 arrangements they are included within this paper. GMMH's challenges with regards to recruitment differ and are being evaluated and considered.
- 3.5 In 2022 the approval of the payment of the market supplement paid to Social Workers and Senior Practitioner saw the commitment of £217,426.00 across the assessment service. It is worth noting that since the introduction of the market supplement there has been savings of £248,529.80 in agency spend on social workers and senior practitioners (this is not inclusive of Approved Mental Health Practitioners). Therefore, there is a positive argument with regards to the success of the payment of the market supplement aiding to reduce agency spend across the service.

4 Rates of Pay and Benefits

- 4.1 In 2022 market comparison work was completed by colleagues within human resources which identified that Trafford fell 6th out of the 10 Greater Manchester (GM) Local Authorities in rates of pay for band 7 and 8 Social Workers and band 9 Senior Practitioners. This is due in part to the way in which the pay lines are drawn in other GM authorities. The work completed assisted in developing the level of market supplement that is currently paid to Social Workers and Senior Practitioners; making Trafford's pay competitive bringing the pay rates to 3rd in GM.
- 4.2 Market supplement payments in 2022, as described above, required the additional commitment of £229,678.00 with the agreed payments to staff being: Level 2 Social Workers -£872.00, Level 3 Social Workers- £2,145.00, and Senior Practitioners- £996.00 per annum and pro rata for part time employees.
- 4.3 A review of these rates has been completed and as you have seen in the introduction of this paper, Trafford's competitive rate has decreased, placing

Trafford at a lower position within GM. However it was recognised these rates were exclusive of the market supplement payments, which alter Trafford's position. Table 5 outlines Trafford's position with regards to Social Work pay across GM without and with consideration of current market supplement.

Table 5- Rates of Pay without/with Market Supplement 2023/2024

Role	Salaries without Market Supplement
Level 2	£34,834.00 - £37,336.00
Level 3	£38,223.00 - £40,221.00
Senior Practitioner	£41,418.00 - £44,428.00

Role	Salaries with Market Supplement
Level 2	£35,706.00 - £38,208.00
Level 3	£40,368.00 - £42,366.00
Senior Practitioner	£42,414.00 - £45,424.00

- 4.4 As stated, further market comparison work was completed by colleagues within HR which identified Trafford's position within GM regarding rates of pay without the market supplement. Table 6 outlines Trafford's position without the market supplement at all levels.

Table 6- Trafford Position within GM without Market Supplement Payments

Band 7- Level 2

Local Authority	Pay	Rated
Tameside	£42,403.00	1
Oldham	£40,221.00	2
Bolton	£39,186.00	3
Salford	£39,186.00	3
Stockport	£39,186.00	3
Bury	£38,223.00	4
Manchester	£38,223.00	4
Wigan	£38,223.00	4
Rochdale	£37,336.00	5
Trafford	£37,336.00	5

Band 8- Level 3

Local Authority	Pay	Rated
Oldham	£44,428.00	1
Bolton	£43,421.00	2
Manchester	£43,421.00	2
Salford	£43,421.00	2
Rochdale	£42,403.00	3
Stockport	£42,403.00	3
Tameside	£42,203.00	4
Wigan	£42,203.00	4
Bury	£41,418.00	5

Trafford	£40,221.00	6
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Band 9- Senior Practitioner

Local Authority	Pay	Rated
Oldham	£48,474.00	1
Tameside	£47,420.00	2
Wigan	£46,464.00	3
Bury	£46,464.00	3
Rochdale	£46,464.00	3
Trafford	£44,428.00	4
Manchester	£43,421.00	5
Stockport	£42,403.00	6
Bolton	£39,186.00	7
Salford	No return	No return

- 4.5 It is however recognised that with the payment of the current market supplement, Trafford's is in a differing position which Table 7 demonstrates.

Table 7- Trafford Position in GM with current Market Supplement

Role	Pay	Rated
Level 2 SW	£35,706.00 - £38,208.00	6+
Level 3 SW	£40,368.00 - £42,366.00	4+
Senior Practitioner	£42,414.00 - £45,424.00	4

- 4.6 Table 6 demonstrates without consideration of the current market supplement being paid that Trafford are amongst the lowest paying local authorities within GM for Social Workers and are the lowest paying LA for level 3 Social Workers. Positively, whilst not the highest paying for Senior Practitioners, Trafford is 4th out of 7, with one LA not providing a return.
- 4.7 However, whilst not radically different, with the current market supplement pay arrangements Trafford are not the lowest paying LA when considering all three posts. With the market supplement payment level 2 Social Workers, if paid at the top of the banding, Trafford would come slightly higher than 6th. Additionally, with the payment of the market supplement, if paid at the top of the banding, level 3 Social Workers, fall slightly higher than 4th, changing the position from being the lowest paying LA within GM.
- 4.8 These findings strongly suggest, without further considerations, that a commitment to continue with the current levels of pay will be essential however, further consideration will also be afforded to alternative options.

5 Considerations

- 5.1 Proceeding sections of this paper provides information which require careful consideration to support in decision making. Evidence suggests that the current market supplement payment has assisted the assessment service in

aiding in a reduction of staff turnover, reducing agency staff, and supporting to ensure Trafford is not the lowest paying LA within GM.

- 5.2 A second consideration for noting is the rate of pay of Band 10 Team Managers within the assessment service, who are not in receipt of a supplement. Current staff have raised concerns regarding pay and responsibilities; highlighting insignificance in differentiation of pay rates to responsibilities particularly between band 9 and band 10 staff, therefore is considered as part of this paper.
- 5.3 Band 10 staff who fulfil the role of Team Managers within borough-wide teams within the assessment service, pay scale ranges from £45,441 to £47,420 with Band 9, Senior Practitioners, pay ranging (with the market supplement) from £42,414 to £45,424. It is therefore acknowledged that a Senior Practitioner at the top of the banding would be in receipt of a wage which is only £17.00 less than their line manager and a Team Manager who holds a greater level of responsibilities not only for managing risks, but financial responsibilities and expectations.
- 5.4 Consequently, it is argued that any Team Managers, if not already should be starting on the top spinal column 38 of Band 10, a financial difference of £1,040, creating a distinction between the roles and more importantly level of responsibilities.
- 5.5 Lastly, it would be remiss to negate highlighting the Council's financial position and whilst acknowledging that there are tremendous pressures on Trafford's finances, the £217,426 cost of the proposed recommendation to retain the market supplement approach is budgeted for in 2024/5 and can be built into future budgets. It is envisaged that this will support the Council's ambitions to limit agency spend where possible which does lead to unplanned cost pressures if not closely monitored and controlled.

6.0 Proposals summary and recommendations

- 6.1 The proposal seeks to extend the current market supplement payments for a further 2 years. It is argued that the precursory information above demonstrates that since the implementation of the market supplement staff turnover rates have reduced. Additionally, there has been a noticeable reduction in agency spend and vacancies within the service. It is acknowledged that whilst the continued payment does not have the same impact as it did initially (3rd out of 10) it has ensured that Trafford is not the lowest paying LA within GM.
- 6.2 It is noted however, in the considerations section of this paper the concerns raised by staff regarding rates of pay between Senior Practitioners and Team Managers. Acknowledging the differences in expectations and responsibilities is important and therefore it is recommended that all Team Managers commence on Band 10, spinal column 38, to avoid animosity amongst the workforce. As all positions forecasted at the top of the banding this would not create any further budget pressures for the directorate or LA.

6.3 The current market supplement payments also form part of budget arrangements and create no further budget pressures within the system.

It is recommended that Employment Committee:

1. Note and approve the recommendation to continue to pay the current Market Factor Supplement payments to the employees of Adult Social Care working in a social work role for a further 2 years until 30 June 2026 subject to a review after 12 months:
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