



## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 002654  
Date            09 August 2018

### ***Children's Services***

#### **Request:**

1. Please provide a Children's Services structure chart indicating names of postholders ideally down to and including Service Managers. Please include your Principal Officer?.

We can confirm that the department holds information that you have asked for in relation to the above. However, the information is exempt under section 21 of the FOI Act because it is reasonably accessible to you, and I am pleased to inform you that you can access it on our website via the following links:

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=10485&p=0>

Section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act exempts disclosure of information that is reasonably accessible by other means, and the terms of the exemption mean that we do not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for you to have the information.

You can find out more about Section 21 by reading the extract from the Act, available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/21>

2. Who within both Children's Services and Human Resources takes lead responsibility for child protection social workers?  
[As above](#)
3. Please provide a copy of any strategy document you have that addresses recruitment and retention of such social workers? [See attached.](#)
4. If you have a Recruitment and Retention Strategy Group (or similar) please provide the minutes of the last meeting?  
[Informal meetings are held when needed.](#)

# **Recruitment and Retention Plan 2018 – 2019**

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- Corporate Strategic Objectives
- Why we need a strategy
- Key objectives of the Strategy

### 2 ACTION PLAN

- Attraction and Recruitment
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## **Corporate Strategic Objectives**

The City of Wolverhampton's Corporate Plan 2016-2018 has the workforce as a key priority. The Organisational Development Strategy recognises the need for a highly skilled and stable workforce in both Children's and Adult's Social Care. This work sits within the overarching C3 work stream of "Delivering a confident, capable council" which has seven strands. One of these is Future People and is outlined below.

### ***Creating a skilled, flexible workforce, increasing employee engagement and developing a can-do culture***

- Have an even safer, legally compliant working environment for employees
- Enhance performance, productivity and efficiency by providing support to employees to ensure their health and wellbeing
- Have a leadership development plan and workforce strategy to help the organisation deliver the Corporate Plan
- Maximise the capability of the workforce to deliver the council's priority outcomes by ensuring that it is flexible, engaged and agile
- Develop and maintain a more diverse and inclusive workforce

The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to enhancing the attraction and development of the Social Work workforce at all levels of practice.

### **Why we need a strategy?**

The recruitment and retention of high quality social workers is a key function that supports the delivery of good and safe social work intervention. Recruitment and retention supports the development of a stable workforce which is an integral part of any improvement journey. A stable workforce allows the Council to embed good practice and provide children, families and adults with consistent workers. This is important because it is known that staff turnover is this biggest contributing factor to delay in casework.

The provision of high quality social work services relies upon a well-trained, supported and motivated workforce. Nationally both Adult's and Children's social work currently faces workforce challenges due to a range of pressures. Child and Family Social Work is challenged by high turnover and vacancy rates, a heavy reliance on agency staff and demand for permanent, experienced workers outstrips supply.

In Adult Social Care it is estimated that by 2030 the number of people aged over 85 will have doubled, whilst advances in healthcare mean people with disabilities and long-term health conditions are living longer. Longer life expectancy is to be welcomed, but it does mean in future, care services will be an important part of more peoples' lives.

Experimental statistics published by the Department for Education (DfE) for the year ending 30 September 2017 showed the regional averages for agency workers and turnover rates with individual local authority rates ranging between 0 and 56 percent. The West Midlands agency rate was 16.7% (Wolverhampton's overall rate in Children's Social Work is 17.1%, August 17).

In the City of Wolverhampton Children and Young People Services has experienced some difficulties recruiting to management positions. Despite making huge improvements in 2017, as frontline managers were promoted or moved on to different areas of practice the Council has found it difficult to recruit permanent suitable qualified and experienced managers into vacant positions. This has been a particular issue in Child Protection and Children in Need teams. Currently posts are filled by agency managers.

The recruitment and retention of social workers, at all levels, is therefore considered a priority to the City of Wolverhampton Council.

### **Key objectives of the strategy**

- Continue to raise the profile of social work in Wolverhampton
- Improve retention of social workers and managers
- Reduce dependency on agency staff

- Ensure a regular and consistent flow of qualified social workers to meet vacancy needs as a result of on-going recruitment based on turnover and service demand.
- Maximise cost effectiveness of Recruitment Advertising and use of multimedia platforms.
- Develop a stable and skilled workforce that can deliver high quality social work intervention ultimately improving outcomes for Children, families and adults with additional needs.
- Ensure the social work pathway enables practitioners have opportunity to develop supervisory, management and leadership skills.

Directorate/Service Area:

People

Business Plan Accountable Officer:

Louise Haughton

What?



Who?



Why?

When?





With What?




So What?


Corp. Plan Ref	Action Title	Responsible Officer	Anticipated Outcome/Result	Timescales		Performance Measures	Progress Update	RAG Rating
				Proposed Start Date	Proposed End Date			
	<b>Attraction and Recruitment</b>							
	<i>Explore partnering with another agency to fill social work vacancies and present an options paper to SW development board in November</i>	<i>Human Resources Principal Social Worker</i>	<p>Reduce vacancy rate to 17% and below in line with nationally averages</p> <p>This will result in a more stable workforce who are able to provide more consistent support to children and families</p>	September 2018	March 2019	Reduce vacancy rate (this is currently 20%) to 17% and below		
	<i>Explore recruiting social workers from abroad</i>	<i>Human Resources Principal Social Worker</i>	Reduce vacancy rate to 17% and below in line with nationally averages	April 2018	September 2018	Reduce vacancy rate (this is currently	This is currently being explored	



	<i>Paper to CYP management team in September 2018</i>		This will result in a more stable workforce who are able to provide more consistent support to children and families			20%) to 17% and below		
	<i>Recruitment and retention officer to lead on the development of the SW vacancies micro site and ensure it is searchable and easy to access from the council website</i>	<i>Human Resources Principal Social Worker</i>	<i>Reduce vacancy rate to 17% and below in line with nationally averages</i>  <i>This will result in a more stable workforce who are able to provide more consistent support to children and families</i>	<i>April 2018</i>	<i>November 2018</i>	<i>Able to fill vacancies due to high calibre applicants being more attracted to Wolverhampton</i> <i>Reduce vacancy rate (this is currently 20%) to 17% and below</i>	<i>In Development</i>	
	<i>RP video to be finished and added to micro-site to promote the council's way of working and the positive working culture being established</i>	<i>Principal Social Worker Communications</i>	<i>High calibre social workers will view the City of Wolverhampton as an employer of choice</i>  <i>This will result in children and families receiving high quality support and interventions</i>	<i>June 2018</i>	<i>November 2018</i>	<i>Able to fill vacancies due to high calibre applicants being more attracted to Wolverhampton</i> <i>Reduce vacancy rate (this is currently 20%) to 17% and below</i>	<i>In Development</i>	






	<i>Manage a continually open targeted recruitment programme for NQSW's, experienced professionals and managers in CYP Services</i>	<i>Heads of Service Human Resources Recruitment Officer</i>	<i>% increase in permanent experienced social work practitioners and first line managers with matched reduction in reliance on agency workers</i>	<i>March 2017</i>	<i>Review March 2019</i>	<i>% increase in permanent experienced social work practitioners and first line managers with matched reduction in reliance on agency workers</i>	<i>Interviews are now scheduled to take place bi-monthly. [continuing – regular process review meetings]</i>	
	<i>Attend social work recruitment fair's within the region</i>	<i>Heads of Service Principal Social Worker Recruitment Officer</i>	<i>Raising the profile of WCC as an employer at specialist recruitment events</i>	<i>March 2017</i>	<i>Review March 2019</i>	<i>Increase in the attraction of social workers and social work manager from within and without the region</i>	<i>Attend the Compass event in Birmingham annually. Attended the Manchester Compass event in May 2018</i>	
	<i>Social work student final year placement strategy increases the number of students who apply and are successful in achieving a social work position within Wolverhampton</i>	<i>Heads of Service Student Placement Co-ordinator</i>	<i>Increased % of final year students actively encouraged to apply for NQSW posts.</i>	<i>March 2017</i>	<i>November 2018</i>	<i>Recruitment data identifying recruitment source category i.e. % of final year students recruited into NQSW posts.</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>	
	<i>Successfully implement "Think Ahead"</i>	<i>Head of Service Mental Health</i>	<i>High calibre participants are trained to a high standard and contribute to the quality of social</i>	<i>June 2015</i>	<i>Review August 2017</i>	<i>% of Think Ahead practitioners remain with the local Authority</i>	<i>One of the first cohort has secured a position within the authority post ASYE There were no vacancies within the mental health team for</i>	


			<i>work practice within the Local Authority</i>				<i>participants to move into</i>  <i>The second cohort have successfully completed year one</i>	
	<i>Partner with Frontline to attract and train high calibre social work students</i>	<i>Strategic Director of Children Head of CIN/CP</i>  <i>Principal Social Worker and Young People's Services</i>	<i>High calibre participants are trained to a high standard and contribute to the quality of social work practice within the Local Authority</i>	<i>June 2016</i>	<i>Review August 2018</i>	<i>% of Frontline practitioners that remain with the Local Authority</i>	<i>Frontline and Wolverhampton have agreed to the partnership again and the number of units has increased to two.</i>  <i>All of the first 4 participants will be staying with Wolverhampton to complete their ASYE year.</i>  <i>A second CSW and deputy has been appointed and the eight participants start with the council September 2018</i>	
	<b>Retention</b>							
	<i>CYP workforce engagement action plan to be completed</i>	<i>Heads, of Service Principal Social worker</i>	<i>Turnover rates will be reduced resulting in higher levels of workforce stability</i>	<i>July 2018</i>	<i>Review March 2019</i>	<i>Turnover % to be reduced to 14% in line with national averages. (currently 25%)</i>	<i>Action Plan developed and on track</i>	
	<i>All new starters to receive both the corporate and service area induction</i>	<i>Heads of Service</i>	<i>New starters understand the values and core behaviours of Wolverhampton</i>	<i>October 2016</i>	<i>Review October 2017</i>	<i>All new starts receive an induction. % increase of this in the Social</i>	<i>Corporate induction is available to all managers and staff through the intranet site.</i>	

			<p><i>City Council, Understand the service area, key policies, complete mandatory training and have a buddy to support their integration within the Local Authority</i></p>			<p><i>Work Health Check 2017</i></p>	<p><i>CYP induction has been developed. It has been briefed out to all staff</i></p> <p><i>Quarterly face to face CYP inductions take place and feedback is consistently good from these events.</i></p> <p><i>All new starters receive a welcome email from the Quality and improvement team with a link to policies and procedures and the induction toolkit</i></p> <p><i>All new managers are invited to meet the Q&amp;I team as part of their induction.</i></p> <p><i>Adult induction tool has been created and briefed out to all managers</i></p>	
	<p><i>ASYE's in CYP Services receive support from Advanced Practitioners including opportunities to observe good practice and attend reflective practice sessions</i></p>	<p><i>Heads of Service</i></p> <p><i>Principal Social Worker</i></p>	<p><i>All NQSW's are supported in their first year in employment to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence</i></p>	<p><i>September 2016</i></p>	<p><i>Review February 2017</i></p>	<p><i>% increase in the number of NQSW's who remain in Wolverhampton after the first year.</i></p> <p><i>Social Work Health Check to identify a % increase in the</i></p>	<p><i>Advanced Practitioners took up their post between mid and late September 2016</i></p> <p><i>Individual action plans evidence quality and scope of impact</i></p> <p><i>Social work health check found that over 60% of the respondents had received support from an Advance Practitioner and 61% of</i></p>	


						<i>number of NQSW's who feel supported and equipped to undertake the social work role</i>	<i>these rated the support they received between 8 and 10 out of 10 in terms of usefulness.</i>	
	<i>Career pathway for Adult's and Children's social workers to be made more accessible to frontline workers and include career development opportunities at all levels.</i>	<i>Principal Social Worker WFD</i>	<i>More social workers understand the career pathways and make use of them to plan their future in The City of Wolverhampton council  A wider range of CPD opportunities are explored within appraisal (eg chair team meeting, opportunities to shadow management meetings) to enable social workers to develop a range of skills</i>	<i>August 2018</i>	<i>January 2019</i>	<i>Retention and destination data showing that social workers are retained for 2- 3 years + and supported for 'talent' development specialism or succession planning to management roles.</i>	<i>CYP restructure to address some of the children's social work career pathways</i>	
	<i>Development of opportunities for social workers to transition between</i>	<i>Principal Social Worker</i>	<i>Social workers considering a change in their career are supported to explore option</i>	<i>February 2017</i>	<i>Review April 2018</i>	<i>Up to six secondment opportunities taken up across Adult's and Children's social Care</i>	<i>The first cohort have successfully completed and shared positive experiences with the wider workforce  The second cohort will be launch in November</i>	

	<i>Adult's and Children's Services</i>		<i>within Wolverhampton</i>				<i>following the restructure of Children and young people's Services..</i>	
	<i>Leadership pathway to be reviewed to incorporate the new leadership functions within the CYP structure and ensure managers have the opportunity to develop social work knowledge and general management skill</i>	<i>Principal Social Worker</i>	<i>Aspiring managers are effectively prepared to step up into a management role and are supported to succeed once in post</i>	<i>February 2017</i>	<i>Review February 2018</i>	<i>Retention data shows managers are retained for 2-3 years +</i>	<i>To be actioned following the CYP restructure</i>	
	<i>Electronic exit questionnaires to be developed</i>	<i>Human Resources</i>	<i>Social workers consistently have the opportunity to share the reasons the reason's they have chosen to exit the Local Authority and the Local Authority can utilise this information to enhance retention strategies.</i>	<i>February 2017</i>	<i>Review Oct 2018</i>	<i>Leavers take the opportunity to complete exit questionnaires</i>	<i>Questionnaire has been developed Sign off was completed 2017, IT issues incurred – Council wide review taking place of Leavers questionnaire – almost complete</i>	


	<p><i>Communication between senior management and frontline practitioners to be improved through the use of regular comms activity and senior managements regular attendance and contribution to social work briefings</i></p>	<p><i>Principal Social Worker Communications Team</i></p>	<p><i>Social workers have opportunity to raise issues and concerns with the senior management team</i></p> <p><i>The senior management team have opportunity to share the key work being undertaken and priorities of the service area</i></p>	<p><i>March 2017</i></p>	<p><i>Review March 2018</i></p>	<p><i>The social work health check identifies improved communications between social workers and the senior leadership team</i></p>	<p><i>CYP Transformation newsletter is published quarterly</i></p> <p><i>Adult's transformation newsletter is published quarterly</i></p> <p><i>CYP and Adult social Care activity is regularly published in City People</i></p> <p><i>Quarterly social work briefings take place in CYP Services</i></p> <p><i>Coffee and conversation events take place 6 weekly across CYP between frontline staff and the CYP management team.</i></p> <p><i>Twice annual social work briefings have recently been introduced in Adult's services</i></p> <p><i>Twice annual wider ASC workforce briefings have now been introduced</i></p> <p><i>Annual social work conference takes place including Adult and CYP services</i></p> <p><i>Annual Health check for both ASC and CYP</i></p>	
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							<p>report that most social workers feel that communication is good between Senior Leaders and frontline staff</p> <p>CYP update and ASC updates have now been introduced and provide the workforce with bi-weekly/monthly updates on positive activity across the services</p>	
	<p>Social Work Health Check to be completed annually, Findings to inform the recruitment and retention plan</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker</p>	<p>Social workers have opportunity to communicate what is working well and areas of concern</p> <p>Senior managers respond to this and learning is included within the action plan, resulting in improved retention of staff</p>	<p>March 2018</p>	<p>March 2019</p>	<p>The social work health check identifies improved communications between social workers and the senior leadership team and increased satisfaction of working in Wolverhampton</p>	<p>Social work health check completed in June 2018, 47% response rate for CYP and over 60% response rate for ASC</p> <p>Actions are being addressed in action plans and information will be presented to social workers in November</p>	

**RAG Rating:**

Significant Risk that it will not be achieved 

Some risk that it may not be achieved although this may be corrected by remedial action 

On target to complete on or before its target date 

Completed 