

Recruitment and Retention of Social workers

January 2020

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An overview from the PSW

- What do we know – what is the research/evidence telling us
- Key challenges for Middlesbrough
- What are we doing – 5 key priorities
- Questions/reflections

What do we know: National Picture

- DfE (2019) published 5 years longitudinal study of children and family social workers
- Motivation to join the profession based on altruistic reasons
- Majority found job satisfying, and were loyal to employer
- Majority felt well prepared for entry into the profession
- However within 2- 3 years they became dissatisfied across a range of factors;
- About half felt stressed, and this was linked to excessive or unmanageable caseloads
- The majority of SW worked at least 7 hours above contracted hours to be able to fulfil their job

What do we know: the evidence

- 59% of Social Workers leave their Local Authority within the first 5 years (for Middlesbrough 72%)
- Those employed less than 3 years are more likely to plan this / and do leave
- Average career of Children's SW is less than 8 years (Nurse 16 /Doctor 25 years)
- Loss of experienced social worker has significant impact for LA – quality of service / relationships with children families compromised and costs of investment in staff

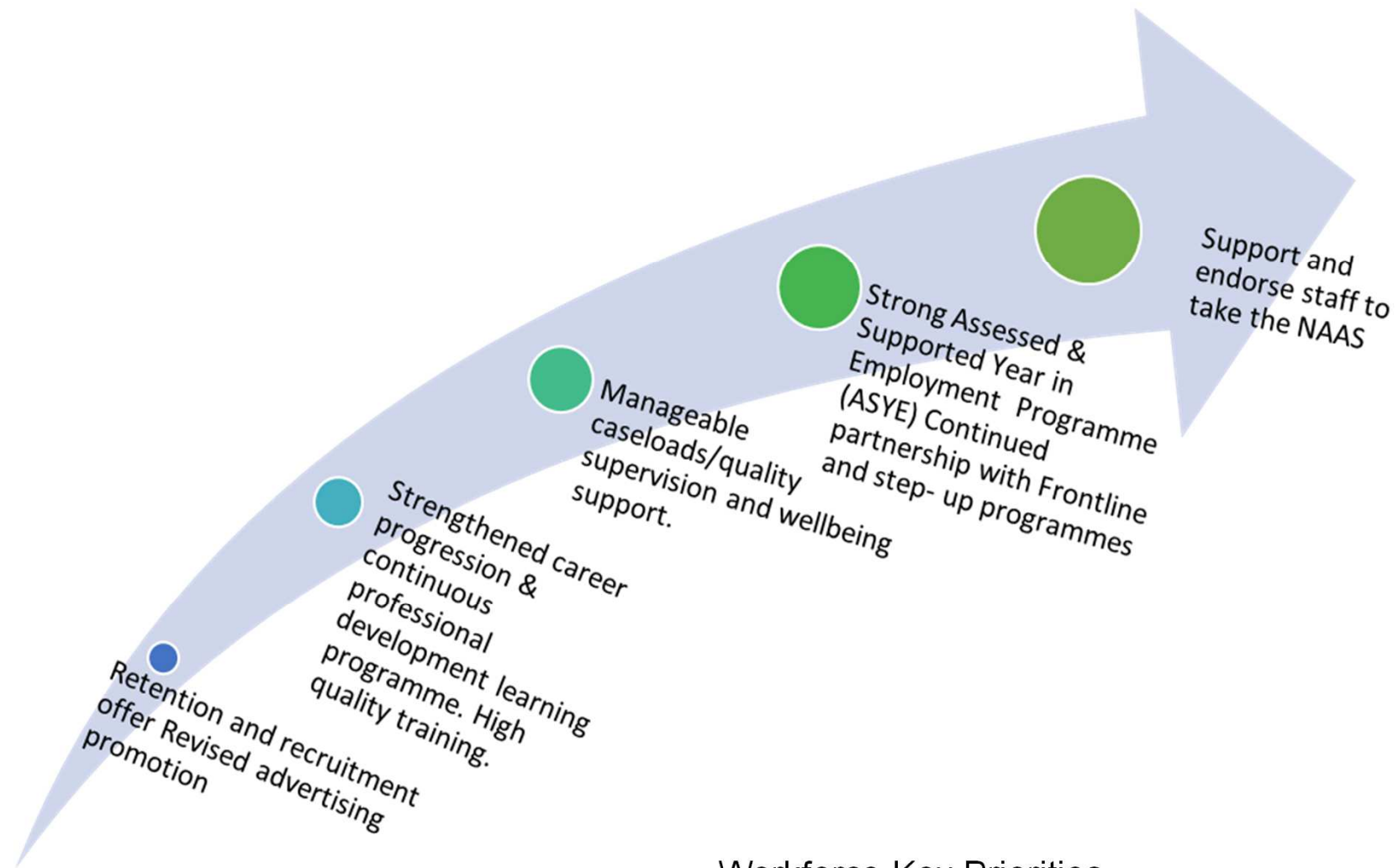
Middlesbrough profile

Social workers December 2019

	Social workers	Percentage	National average
Full time employees	170.11		
Less than 2 years' experience	76.72	45.54%	
Less than 5 years' experience	123.54	72.62%	68%
Starters	42.61		
Leavers	35.41	34% with less 5 years' experience	15.2%
Turnover rate		20.82%	
Vacancies		3.95%	16.50 %
Absence		3.23%	3%
Agency		3.15%	15.40%

Push /pull factors DfE research

Top 5 <u>main reasons</u> for leaving or considering leaving, local authority child and family Social Work	Top 5 <u>main reasons</u> that would influence social workers to remain or return to local authority child and family social work
1. I don't like the culture of local authority work - 13%	1. A more manageable workload (caseload) – 21%
1. I will be retiring /retired – 12%	1. No, nothing would encourage me – 18%
1. High caseload – 12%	1. Higher pay – 11%
1. I did not/am not making the best use of my skills or experience I have -10%	1. A more manageable workload (admin /paperwork) -11%
1. It is not compatible with family or relationship commitments – 9%	1. Better/more promotion/progression opportunities – 7%



Workforce Key Priorities



1. What are we doing – recruitment and retention

- Implemented the Councils Recruitment and retention policy for experienced social workers with a clear financial offer to match regional LA pay
- *Evidence to show that social workers are leaving the authority due to dissatisfaction over salary*
- To attract experienced Social Workers to come and work in Middlesbrough
- *Evidence of limited or no applications for posts*
- Work with HR to revise our on-line profile to be clear about the Middlesbrough offer
- Recognise R & R of a skilled workforce presents one of our greatest challenges, and is acknowledged by Senior Leaders nationally as one of the greatest risks to effective service delivery.

Recruitment and Retention offer

- One off payment to Social Workers sign up to stay in an eligible post for 3 years.
- If social workers leave during that time they will pay back a reducing %.
- The offer is 15% of current salary: ranging from £4,706 - £6,695

- **Recruitment** - This is applied to eligible social workers and forms part of our advertised offer.
- Offer is for experienced social workers Grade K, L, Assistant Team Managers and Team Managers
- **Retention** - Eligible Childrens Social Workers Grade K, L, Assistant Team Managers and Team Managers

83% of eligible Social workers have signed up to the R & R offer.
68 / 82 eligible social workers

2. What are we doing - progression

- We are revising our career progression to support succession and talent.
- We are investing in our managers who will support this process via supervision and mentoring Programmes -Firstline & Practice Supervisor Development Programme
- Investing in high quality skills based Programme and delivering core learning (Action Learning Sets) directly linked to case audit and learning reviews.
- Supporting our staff to meet the new Social Work England regulators registration requirements

3. What are we doing -staff wellbeing and caseloads

- We monitor caseloads weekly and have detailed performance reporting to support managers .
- All efforts are made to cap caseloads, newly qualified SW have protected caseloads
- We undertake a specific annual social work survey based on LGA guidelines to inform workforce planning and assess the wellbeing if our workforce. The PSW meets quarterly with teams.
- Our workforce strategy links directly to the councils people strategy and council values

4. What are we doing – learning and development

- Partnered with 'Frontline' and 'Step Up' Programme to attract high caliber students/recruits
- We have a strong Assessed and Supported Year in Employment Programme (ASYE) and offer for Newly qualified SW .
- Invested in high quality Training and learning Programmes
- Supporting staff to meet the knowledge and skills (KSS) required to meet the standards required fro a child and family practitioner and practice supervisor.
- Access to up to date research and evidence to support practice
- Support the delivery of quality reflective supervision

5. What are we doing -NAAS

National Accreditation and Assessment System

- We are part of phase 2 supported by the DfE
- NAAS provides national benchmark of good practice
- Improvement tool to enhance the expertise and knowledge of social workers and aims to improve the quality of practice
- We have received funding to support this and we are using to invest and support the professional development of Social Workers in Middlesbrough.
- Link to support the career progression of social workers
- Supports our vision to develop excellent practitioners
- 8 social workers are now accredited and a further 25 endorsed and waiting for results/assessment dates.

Questions

