

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Date: Wednesday, 8 December 2021
Time: 10.30 a.m.
Venue: Virtual Meeting

Please note this is a virtual meeting.

**The meeting will be livestreamed via
the Council's YouTube channel at
[Middlesbrough Council - YouTube](#)**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest.
3. Minutes - Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel - 10 November 2021 3 - 8
4. Integration of Health and Social Care - Verbal Update

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration will provide the panel with a verbal update regarding the integration of health and social care.
5. Draft Final Report - The Recruitment and Retention of Staff within Adult Social Care 9 - 26

The Scrutiny Panel will be asked to consider and approve the content of the draft final report and determine recommendations for submission to the Executive.
6. Overview and Scrutiny Board Update

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 9 November 2021.
7. Date of Next Meeting - 5 January 2022

8. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Tuesday, 30 November 2021

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors J Platt (Chair), G Wilson (Vice-Chair), D Coupe, D Davison, T Higgins, D Jones, G Purvis, D Rooney and J Walker.

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Chris Lunn, 01642 729742, chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel was held on Wednesday, 10 November 2021.

PRESENT: Councillors J Platt (Chair), G Wilson (Vice-Chair), D Coupe, D Davison, G Purvis and D Rooney.

OFFICERS: C Lunn and E Scollay.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors D Jones and J Walker

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

MINUTES - ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL - 13 OCTOBER 2021

The minutes of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 13 October 2021 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

INTEGRATION OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE - VERBAL UPDATE

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration provided Members with an update regarding the integration of Health and Social Care. With specific focus on the current reorganisation of the NHS, the following points were made:

- Locally, Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) would be dissolved and a new Integrated Care System (ICS) implemented next year. Middlesbrough would fall under North East and Cumbria, a much larger geographical footprint than at present.
- The Director, along with the Director of Public Health, had attended meetings with Tees Valley partners in relation to the structure of the ICS. It was indicated that there would be a single local area board responsible for decisions on a Tees footprint, and a higher level single board responsible for the whole of the geographical area.
- The higher level board would be a board of the NHS, with constituent members determined by the Secretary of State. The Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) would feed into that board. The ICP would provide a committee structure to allow for other partner agencies, such as local authorities, fire services, voluntary sector, etc., to contribute to discussions around long-term health needs. The structure of the ICP was currently being considered; it had initially been proposed that one single ICP be established to represent all 13 local authorities within the North East and Cumbria. However, in order to provide more workability for smaller local authorities, it was possible that a separate ICP would be established for Teesside. It was felt that, rather than be concerned about the prospect of the ICP, it was more likely to offer opportunity for greater representation locally.
- Reference was made to the importance of preventative work and the opportunity that these changes would allow for increased focus in the future.

During discussion that followed, Members asked a number of queries of the Director. In response, the following information was provided:

- With regards to a timescale for implementation of the ICS, it was explained that a draft constitution was expected to be produced this month in preparation for going live at the start of the next business year. Reference was made to the impact of the pandemic and national recognition that some of the structures associated with the ICS may require further work post-implementation. The importance of ensuring a continued stable structure as the NHS entered the winter period was key at present. It was indicated that the draft constitution would be an internal NHS document and therefore unlikely to be released into the public domain.

- In relation to scrutiny, further details regarding the position of the Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee in relation to the NHS changes were awaited. However, it was indicated that information had been conveyed through the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Regarding the large footprint of the North East and Cumbria ICS and ensuring sufficient resource allocation for Middlesbrough and the Tees Valley, Members heard that, at present, CCGs were provided with the financial resource to make commissioning decisions for health services within the local area. Following the implementation of the ICS, monies would be allocated to the board with the responsibility for all of the North East and Cumbria's large-scale financial decisions. It was indicated that discussions involving the NHS, local authorities and others in respect of financial delegation with the ICS were currently on-going, but the understanding was that the Tees funding streams would remain unchanged, i.e. the amount of monies allocated to the Tees Valley area would stay the same. There was nothing to suggest an imminent loss of control, but instead that there was potential opportunity for local authorities to have a greater influence in terms of where funds were spent. The Tees Valley group had been minded of the potential risk for elements of the ICSA to become 'area-centric', and therefore ensuring sound delegated decision-making around finances were achieved. Reference was made to the challenges facing Middlesbrough, for example health demographics, and the argument for greater investment rather than less.

The Chair thanked the Director for the information presented.

NOTED

INTRODUCTION - THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF STAFF WITHIN ADULT SOCIAL CARE

The Chair explained that this was an additional topic that had been placed into the panel's work programme for this year, which was agreed in July 2021. In the interim period, issues around the recruitment and retention of staff within Adult Social Care had emerged, particularly in relation to 'fieldwork teams', i.e. Social Workers and Social Care Workers.

In addition to matters arising from COVID-19 and developments in the current workforce, details in respect of the Health and Care Bill 2021 had been gradually emerging. Further information regarding the bill was currently awaited, but what had become clear from those details released to date was that there would be significant implications for local authorities. With this in mind, the panel felt it important but this matter be looked into with some urgency.

An informal briefing note / background paper had been circulated to Members detailing for their information. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration was in attendance to provide further information to Members. Through discussion and response to questions from panel members, the panel was apprised of the issues surrounding the topic.

The panel heard that, for a number of years, Adult Social Care had been particularly fortunate in that its workforce had been established and remained particularly stable. However, with a substantial number either at retirement or approaching retirement age, with some taking early retirement owing to the profession becoming more challenging, there had been increased turnover in recent years.

It was explained to Members that when a newly qualified social worker completed their degree programme, which was now mandatory for the profession, this needed to be followed by an Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), which aimed to develop their knowledge, skills and professional confidence. In terms of recruitment, competition for qualified social workers was incredibly strong. It was indicated that during recent recruitment attempts, there had been either very few or no applicants for qualified social worker positions; it had been easier to recruit ASYE social workers and this had been supported, but increased time and investment from supervisors was required during that probationary year. It had become clear during recent months that recruitment to these ASYE positions had also become increasingly difficult, which had therefore made this topic a critical issue for the service.

A Member made reference to neighbouring and other regional local authorities and queried salary differences for qualified social workers. In response, the panel heard that it was difficult to ascertain exact details pertaining to remuneration because local authorities set their own salary rates, which owing to the competitiveness of recruitment were not easily obtainable. However, it was indicated that one neighbouring local authority did commence their social workers on a salary that was approximately £3,000 higher than Middlesbrough. It was noted that, over time, the salary scales did even out, but it commented that this was an issue because recent graduates may find this particularly appealing.

Members heard that exploratory work was currently taking place with Human Resources to determine potential ways forward to address this issue. It was felt that there was no single, direct response to it. It was noted that staff salary grades were evaluated against a centralised scheme, which meant that to arbitrarily commence a position higher up the scale was particularly complex. It would be unrealistic to raise all salaries within Adult Social Care to ease the recruitment and retention issues.

In relation to COVID-19, it was indicated that the issues surrounding the recruitment and retention of social workers and social care workers were becoming more apparent prior to the pandemic, but suddenly became much more acute during the period. Reference was made to staff turnover within Children's Social Care and how, historically, this had always been reasonably high. This had not been the case in Adult Social Care, and when taking this into account with staff leaving, together with a national recruitment issue around qualified social workers that was more and more acute in the North East than it was nationally.

Details regarding routes into social work were provided to Members. It was explained that a degree and post-graduate registration, similar to that of other professions such as nursing and occupational therapy, were now required to work as a social worker. Previously, various diploma based routes into the profession were offered. It was indicated that, in some instances, some people may have been put off by the fact that training was longer now and that a degree was required and, as such, social work training was expensive. As funding was limited, it was explained that the department had supported staff by providing flexibility around working hours and creating job placement opportunities whilst they completed their studies. Reference was made to a social work degree apprenticeship that had recently been launched; there was currently one individual pursuing this at the moment and it was hoped that this route would be used more in future.

In response to an enquiry, it was explained to the panel that to register as an ASYE social worker, trainee social workers were required to have first completed their degree. Upon reaching the end of the ASYE programme, trainees were able to apply for full social work registration (therefore a total of four years was required to meet all training requirements). It was indicated that the Council did work with Teesside University in terms of providing student placements, but it was important to gain balance with organisational resource.

A short discussion ensued in relation to age, experience and training to become a social worker. It was felt that suitability to train in social work was very much dependent upon the individual concerned. An ability to reflect, listen and empathise was important; life experience was a positive addition, but not always necessary as there had been many examples of younger individuals who may not necessarily be seen to have as much life experience, but have shown great wisdom and professionalism. It was felt that everyone had something to bring to the profession.

A Member made reference to the number of social workers currently employed and queried the status of agency staff. In response, it was explained that Adult Social Care did not have a track record of employing agency social workers as this had not been necessary in previous years. It was explained that attempts to recruit agency social workers to help meet acute pressures in hospital settings over the winter period had been unsuccessful, as there had not been the same availability of experienced social workers within the agency system for adults, as there had been for children's. The panel heard that over the last 12 months, as a consequence of COVID-19, a small managed team of agency workers had been employed to assist with a backlog of some review cases, which had proven to be both effective and efficient. Discussions were currently taking place with a number of agencies as to potentially repeating this to help alleviate some of the present issues. However, owing to the expense of recruiting agency social workers in comparison to recruiting local authority staff, it was intended that this practice would be minimised wherever possible.

In response to an enquiry regarding departmental structure, the panel heard that now was the appropriate time to perhaps revisit some of it. Consideration was given to the terms 'qualified' and 'unqualified' in relation to social workers; it was highlighted that the term 'unqualified' was unfair because there were individuals who had acquired other qualifications and significant experience and although not qualified in social work, had supported the department for years. In terms of potential ways of working in the future, it was possible that Adult Social Care could be operated with a smaller number of qualified social workers, with a higher ratio of clients to qualified social workers. However, this could not mean an increase in caseloads as that would be unsafe. It was possible that an increase in the number of social care workers could be included within the structure, with teams made up of a couple of (supervising) social workers and the rest social care workers. Social care workers were perhaps easier to recruit and came from a broader range of backgrounds. If social workers were placed in a supervisory role, consideration would need to be given towards supporting their training and development, as well as towards remuneration and linking job grades to offer clear career progression and make the Council more attractive to potential recruits. In relation to a recruitment retention payment, it was explained to Members that if this were to be introduced for Adult Social Care, this would potentially be a cost pressure for the local authority. Therefore, it was important that structures be looked at accordingly to ensure best value. It was felt that remuneration was only one element of recruitment and retention – career development and opportunities for staff were also key.

A Member commented that the Council's social care and social work teams carried out incredible work under very difficult circumstances, and felt that establishment of a clear career structure within any remodelled service would encourage individuals to apply for positions.

A Member made reference to COVID-19 and queried how this and other similar pressures (e.g. other illnesses) had impacted on the workforce, and how these could potentially dilute interest for future recruits.

In response, it was indicated to the panel that the period of the pandemic and the various lockdowns had been difficult for staff. People were tired, and had been required to not only work in new and flexible ways with constantly changing guidance, but also to work from home. Social workers by nature learnt and/or taught by osmosis and de-stressed by sitting amongst colleagues. As such, the requirement to work from home had prevented this, which in some cases had affected confidence around decision-making. Although recent changes to contracts had provided for blended working, this did not always prove effective for social workers. The pandemic had been an acutely difficult period for social workers, enhanced further by staff being required to perform their duties at risk to their own health. It was highlighted that, without exception, staff had been magnificent.

Members heard that, in light of the loss of staff over the last few years and a consequential reduction in complement, additional pressure had been transferred to those remaining team members. Current vacancies within teams exacerbated the pressure on the staff who were already tired, which drove the acuity of the situation.

It was explained that, in terms of winter-based and other illnesses, there were a number of things that made social work a more complicated profession than it might have been in previous years. For example: the accumulation of recommendations from safeguarding adults reviews and others meant that work was being undertaken with a larger cohort of higher risk individuals at the moment and complex systems were in place around individuals to bring multiple agencies together to address their case, to maximise knowledge and opportunities to work with people or to intervene. However, the process of working with a high number of very chaotic individuals was stressful for the staff involved. We have seen a lot of that in Middlesbrough because of some of the challenges faced in the area. Social work is not only more legally challenging, but there was a shortage of staff and many of the authority's social workers were working with more chaotic service users more of the time, which did bring increased stress. The profession is becoming very challenging and there was no perfect answer to the question about how the authority could make it an attractive proposition. It was felt that people would continue to enter social work and would continue to be driven by the same things; it was a very demanding profession now and likely that there was a gap between remuneration and the reality of it, but that was a national issue and not one confined solely to Middlesbrough.

A Member made reference to Occupational Therapists and queried whether their assistance had been sought to support social work teams. In response, the panel heard that there was an occupational therapy team within Middlesbrough that comprised occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants. From a salary perspective, occupational therapy assistants were paid broadly the same as social care workers, although the roles did differ. On the other hand, there was a large overlap in the skill set of occupational therapists and social workers; the style of working complemented one another especially well. Consideration was currently being given as to whether occupational therapists could potentially fulfil some of the roles that social workers did, in order to help alleviate some of the recruitment pressures.

The panel wished to congratulate the Adult Social Care teams for all of their hard work and accomplishments over the course of the pandemic.

The Director explained that one of the additional pressures related to the position of other partner agencies that the authority worked with. Reference was made to staffing and recruitment pressures currently being experienced by Cleveland Police and the NHS, and some organisations that had a non-statutory role had greater flexibility around stopping certain lines of activity than those with statutory duties. Further exploration around these issues would be undertaken with the organisations concerned to ensure that services were as coordinated as possible and resources were being utilised to their maximum.

With regards to next steps for the investigation, given the current issues being experienced, the panel was keen to progress with some pace. In terms of potential recommendations, a Member proposed that the department deploy a recruitment and retention payment ('golden hello') if they held qualifying experience and would remain with the local authority for a specified period of time. This was supported by other panel members on the basis that it would be introduced in line with the Council's existing policies and that it aligned with the current structure and other similar roles within the authority.

A Member made reference to a previous scrutiny investigation undertaken several years previously that focused on the role of Adult Mental Health Practitioners (AMHPs). Such matters as responsibilities and remuneration of AMHPs had been considered during that review. It was commented that if the introduction of a recruitment and retention payment assisted with the issues currently being experienced then the panel should recommend this, provided that the Council's existing rules and regulations were not transgressed.

The Director indicated that a business case was currently being prepared to implement a recruitment and retention policy within Adult Social Care for the 'field work' team, which would align with existing Council policies. An outline of the process was provided to the panel, including details regarding the requirements for recruitment and retention payments to be considered (i.e. where there was a shortage category and recruitment attempts had been unsuccessful), their determination based on market rate, their longevity, and how payments would be controlled in line with existing corporate policies.

A Member commented that, within the draft report, they would wish to see the range of reasons as to why individuals wanted to remain and why they wanted to leave both the Council and the profession.

A Member made reference to the recruitment and retention payments within Children's Services and the requirement for recipients to remain with the authority for a minimum three year term. In response, it was indicated that the same term, practice and process would apply for Adult Social Care, if progressed.

In terms of next steps and in response to the panel's desire to complete this review with some pace, it was agreed that the Democratic Services Officer would draft a final report for review by the panel. This would be discussed at an informal meeting, before formal consideration in December 2021.

The Chair thanked the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration for his contributions to the meeting.

AGREED that:

1. A draft final report be prepared for discussion by the panel at an informal meeting, date to be arranged by the Democratic Services Officer. Final draft report to be subsequently prepared for the 8 December 2021 meeting.
2. The information, as presented, be noted.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update on the matters that were considered at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting on 20 October 2021.

NOTED

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 8 DECEMBER 2021

The next meeting of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel had been scheduled for 8 December 2021.

NOTED

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

None.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

**DRAFT FINAL REPORT OF THE
ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES
SCRUTINY PANEL –
THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF STAFF
WITHIN ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To present the draft final report of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel following its investigation into 'The Recruitment and Retention of Staff within Adult Social Care'.

AIM OF THE INVESTIGATION

2. The aim of the investigation was to examine staff recruitment and retention within Adult Social Care (specifically in relation to 'fieldwork' teams, i.e. Social Workers and Social Care Workers), and the work being carried-out by the Council to support and develop this.

MAYOR'S VISION

3. The scrutiny of this topic fits within the following priorities of the Mayor's Vision (Middlesbrough Council, 2020):
 - Making Middlesbrough look and feel amazing;
 - Winning investment and creating jobs; and
 - Creating positive perceptions of our town on a national basis.

COUNCIL'S THREE CORE OBJECTIVES

4. The scrutiny of this topic aligns with the Council's three core objectives, as detailed in the Strategic Plan 2021-2024 (Middlesbrough Council, 2021):
 - People – Working with communities and other public services in Middlesbrough to improve the lives of local people;
 - Place – Securing improvements in Middlesbrough's housing, infrastructure and attractiveness, improving the town's reputation, creating opportunities for local people and improving our finances; and
 - Business – Promoting investment in Middlesbrough's economy and making sure we work as effectively as possible to support our ambitions for People and Place.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

5. The terms of reference for the scrutiny panel's investigation were as follows:
 - a) To understand the role of Social Workers and Social Care Workers and the routes into the profession.
 - b) To consider the historical position in respect of the Adult Social Care workforce and identify the current challenges and difficulties around the recruitment and retention of Social Workers and Social Care Workers.
 - c) To establish the impact of COVID-19 and other wider issues on Social Workers and Social Care Workers.
 - d) To examine potential solutions and effective interventions that will address recruitment and retention issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

6. Since the panel agreed its work programme on 7 July 2021, issues concerning the recruitment and retention of staff within Adult Social Care have been raised with Members. The panel's investigation focuses specifically upon 'fieldwork' teams, i.e. Social Workers and Social Care Workers, as this is the area of activity where recruitment and retention issues have been identified.
7. In addition to matters arising from COVID-19 and developments concerning the current workforce, details in respect of the Health and Care Bill 2021 have gradually been emerging. At the time of writing, further information regarding the Bill is awaited. Further to this, the national picture suggests a shortage of Social Workers, with an acute problem in the North East. With this in mind, the panel felt it important that this topic be added to the work programme and investigated with pace.

SETTING THE SCENE

8. In order to ascertain the Local Authority's current position regarding the recruitment and retention of Adult Social Care staff, and to explore these issues further, the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel met on 10 November 2021.
9. In addition to receiving information at the above meeting, the panel members also received a briefing note / background paper.
10. The panel was provided with information / evidence from Erik Scollay, Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration for Middlesbrough Council. Information was also obtained from Human Resources for the purpose of understanding salary related information; research was undertaken using third-party sources.
11. The panel wishes to convey its appreciation to all of the Adult Social Care teams for their hard work, dedication and accomplishments over the course of the pandemic.
12. The information provided to the panel has been considered in respect of the terms of reference, presented as follows:

TERM OF REFERENCE A:

To understand the role of Social Workers and Social Care Workers and the routes into the profession

13. According to Skills for Care (2021a): "Social Worker jobs have generally been retained by Local Authorities during a period where many other jobs have been outsourced to the independent sector".
14. The panel was advised that Adult Social Care is a large directorate within Middlesbrough Council that is made up of a significant number of staff members undertaking a broad range of roles.
15. Social Care Workers operate in a range of different environments to provide advice, guidance and support to help people with their physical, emotional and social needs. With experience, Social Care Workers could progress towards qualifying as a Social Worker.

16. Social Workers provide support to individuals and their families by working with them to find solutions to their problems and improve outcomes in their lives. Through developing and maintaining professional relationships they ensure that vulnerable individuals are safeguarded from abuse or harm, or supported to live independently by guiding them through the difficulties that they are experiencing. Social Workers work in a variety of different settings and client groups, using legislative frameworks to act, guide and advocate accordingly. It can be a challenging role, though one that can provide high levels of personal reward and satisfaction. (NHS, 2021; Prospects, 2021).
17. The panel learnt that, in terms of age, experience and training, the suitability to train in social work is very much dependent upon the individual concerned. Key attributes include an ability to reflect, listen and empathise; to show resilience, solve problems and motivate individuals. Life experience is a positive addition, but not always necessary as there have been many examples of younger individuals demonstrating great wisdom and professionalism. It was felt that anyone could bring something to the profession.
18. Members heard that all Social Workers must be registered with Social Care England in order to practise. To gain full registration status, an approved degree or postgraduate degree programme in Social Work needs to be completed, which is similar to other professions such as Nursing and Occupational Therapy. Various diploma routes had been available previously, though these are no longer offered. Full-time degree courses take three or four years to complete and therefore training is expensive. The panel highlights that because funding for training is limited, the Adult Social Care department supports staff by providing flexibility to facilitate learning around working hours, whilst also creating placement opportunities to complement their studies. Prospective candidates already holding degrees are able to undertake 'conversion' opportunities, such as postgraduate qualifications, the 'Step up to Social Work' programme, and the 'Think Ahead' programme. In terms of student placements, the panel notes that the Local Authority does work with educational institutions, including Teesside University, to provide these, but understands it is important to gain balance between student availability and organisational resource.
19. The panel heard that following completion of an approved degree programme, trainee Social Workers are required to complete the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme. This is an employer led induction programme that provides support and assessment to Newly-Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS) by consolidating learning from their degree, strengthening professional confidence and developing capability (Skills for Care, 2021b and 2021c). Middlesbrough Council has a very well established ASYE programme in place, which provides opportunity for trainees to be supported by a dedicated ASYE Quality Assurance Practitioner, alongside their line manager. Recent feedback from Skills for Care, states:

"It was evident that Middlesbrough is committed to providing a quality ASYE programme and it was encouraging to hear how the ASYE is embedded within whole organisation workforce strategies."
20. The panel was informed that a Social Work apprenticeship programme, operated in partnership with Sunderland University, has recently been introduced. At present, there is one individual currently undertaking this programme with Middlesbrough Council, which is hoped will be utilised more in the future.

TERM OF REFERENCE B:

To consider the historical position in respect of the Adult Social Care workforce and identify the challenges and difficulties currently encountered in the recruitment and retention of Social Workers and Social Care Workers.

21. In terms of the national picture, according to Skills for Care (2021a):
- The number of Social Workers employed by Local Authorities in England has increased by an average of 2.1% each year since 2016. However, the total number of jobs in Adult Social Services departments has decreased by 28.4% since 2011 despite increasing since 2017. Therefore, while there has been a marginal increase in the number of Social Worker positions across the sector, reductions in wider staff across the Adult Social Care workforce overwhelmingly negate that increase.
 - The turnover rate for Social Workers in Local Authorities was 13.6% in 2020. This figure has decreased each year from 16.0% in 2016.
 - The vacancy rate for Social Workers in Local Authorities was 7.5% in 2020, equivalent to around 1,300 vacant Social Worker posts. This figure has decreased from 13.0% in 2015.
22. Recent developments associated with Brexit may also contribute to the issues discussed in this report. For example: post-Brexit immigration rules were introduced in January 2021. As at 28 October 2021 (GOV.UK website page updated 6 April 2021), 'Social Worker' is a listed occupation that provides eligibility for a Skilled Worker visa and is listed on the 'shortage occupations for healthcare and education' list. Under the rules, Social Workers are still able to immigrate to the UK under the new rules providing they have a job offer and can speak English to the required standard (Skills for Care, 2021a).
23. Locally, the panel understands that Middlesbrough Council's Adult Social Care's 'fieldwork' teams are predominantly comprised of Social Workers and Social Care Workers. These teams undertake assessments of client need; develop and implement care packages and undertake care management. These are the 'traditional' social work teams and are vital to the running of Adult Social Care.
24. The Council's 'fieldwork' resources are spread across a range of teams focusing on specific areas of the Council's statutory roles. These are:
- Affective Disorder Team;
 - Deprivation Of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team;
 - East Locality Care Management Team;
 - Forensic Social Work Team;
 - Hospital Team;
 - Learning Disability / Transitions Team;
 - Psychosis Team Community Mental Health – Older People;
 - Safeguarding / Access Team; and
 - West Locality Care Management Team.
25. Members were informed that the teams vary in size but are consistently made up of a team manager; in some cases an assistant team manager; one or more Principal Practitioners; a number of Social Workers and a number of Social Care Workers. In some of the teams there are some other 'fieldwork' job titles, but they are broadly equivalent to the titles above. In total there are 146 individuals employed across these roles in the teams listed above.

26. The panel notes that, for a number of years, Adult Social Care was particularly fortunate in that its workforce had been well established and remained very stable. However, with a substantial number of staff now either at retirement or approaching retirement age, with some taking early retirement, there has been increased turnover in recent years.
27. Of the 146 posts within the department's 'fieldwork' teams there are currently 29 vacancies, which equates to 20% of the overall staff complement. The vacancies are made up of:
- Assistant Manager – 1;
 - Principal Practitioners – 7;
 - Safeguarding Officer – 1;
 - Social Workers – 16; and
 - Social Care Workers – 3; and
 - Team Managers – 1.
28. This is an unprecedented level of vacancies for Adult Social Care at Middlesbrough Council and it is currently a deteriorating picture. Current vacancies run across all levels of experience, however, as can be seen, Social Workers comprise the majority of current vacancies.
29. Over several months, attempts have been made to recruit Social Workers with both internal and external (via North East Jobs) advertising taking place. However, there have been very low levels of interest and the department has been unable to recruit to its vacant positions. Potential reasons for this include:
- Shortage of Qualified Social Workers: Both nationally and across the North East region (in particular) there is a shortage of Qualified Social Workers choosing to enter the profession. Other Local Authorities are facing similar challenges when recruiting and the Adult Social Care sector is becoming increasingly competitive. Appendix 1 provides a comparative snapshot of the current (as at 24 November 2021) Social Worker vacancies being advertised within Local Authorities' Adult Social Care teams across the North East.
 - Salaries for Social Workers: Whilst some enquiries have been received, potential applicants have either not applied or have been offered positions in Middlesbrough but chosen to accept posts in neighbouring Local Authorities, where pay scales are more competitive. This has been particularly evident when attempting to recruit to Social Worker posts, which would have traditionally attracted newly qualified staff. For example: it is established that the other Tees Valley Local Authorities all pay a higher starting salary to NQSWs, with one neighbouring Local Authority offering a starting salary approximately £3,000.00 higher than Middlesbrough. While initial salary discrepancies equalise over time, this does represent a significant obstacle for recruitment in Middlesbrough. The panel appreciates that it is difficult to establish salary comparisons across neighbouring and North East Local Authorities, given increasing competition in the recruitment of Social Workers, with some Local Authorities reluctant to share information about remuneration packages that they provide. However, in general terms, according to Skills for Care (2021a): "The average full-time equivalent salary for a Local Authority Social Worker was around £37,100 in 2020. This was similar to occupational therapists (£36,700) and allied health professionals (£38,800)".

30. The panel understands that when a NQSW completes their mandatory degree programme, this needs to be followed by an ASYE (which aims to develop their knowledge, skills and professional confidence). As outlined above, competition for Qualified Social Workers is particularly strong. Following recent recruitment attempts, resulting in either very few applicants or no applicants, it had been easier to recruit ASYE Social Workers (i.e. those at the beginning of their career). Although increased time and investment from supervisors is required during this probationary year, recruitment to those positions has been fully supported. However, during recent months, even recruitment to ASYE positions has become increasingly difficult, which only compounds this issue for the service area.
31. With regards to agency staff, the panel was informed that due to a traditionally well-established workforce, Adult Social Care has not routinely employed agency Social Workers. However, the panel also understands there is a lack of available experienced agency Social Workers. As such, recent agency recruitment drives to meet acute pressures in hospital settings over the winter period were unsuccessful. At certain points over the last 12 months, as a consequence of COVID-19, a small managed team of agency workers has been employed to assist with a backlog of some cases, which has proven to be both effective and efficient. There is potential that this approach could be repeated, although this practice would need to be minimised wherever possible as long-term employment of agency staff tends not to be as cost effective as employing Council staff.
32. It was indicated to the panel that, over recent months, a number of staff have chosen to leave the department / profession. The following table identifies potential reasons for this:

Reasons for Staff Retention	Reasons for Staff Departure
Training opportunities and on-going support and learning opportunities – e.g. AYSE Quality Assurance Practitioner support; professional development; and regular supervision.	Salary scale gradings elsewhere / agency work / career progression.
Personal satisfaction and fulfilment; a rewarding career helping others. It is likely that prospective Social Workers will be drawn to Social Work for the same reasons as their predecessors were, e.g. to support and help make a difference to peoples' lives.	Retirement (see paragraph 26).
Wide range of employee benefits, including: transport initiatives; concession rates for sports and leisure membership; health and wellbeing support and access to occupational health services; and loan / credit union savings schemes. Staff receive automatic enrolment into the generous Local Government Pension Scheme, with the opportunity to	Increasingly Complex Work Recently, the department's work has become increasingly complex, working with clients who are experiencing issues such as Domestic Violence, Substance Misuse, Homelessness or Trauma. Taking into consideration this rising complexity with the number of vacant posts, increased pressure and absence

make Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) should they wish.	is currently being experienced within 'fieldwork' teams.
Generous annual leave allowance and flexible working; opportunity for blended working.	The Impact of COVID-19 (see Term of Reference C).

TERM OF REFERENCE C:

To establish the impact of COVID-19 and other wider issues on Social Workers and Social Care Workers.

33. The panel understands that the issues surrounding the recruitment and retention of Social Workers and Social Care Workers were becoming more apparent prior to the pandemic, but suddenly became much more acute during this period.
34. The panel recognises that the Council's Adult Social Care teams have been at the forefront of the response to COVID-19 and, as a consequence, are professionally and personally fatigued. Staff have been required to not only work in new and flexible ways with constantly changing guidance, but also to work from home. Social Workers by nature learn and / or teach by osmosis and de-stress by sitting amongst colleagues. As such, the requirement to work from home has severely limited / prevented this. Although recent changes to contracts have provided for blended working, this may not always prove effective for Social Workers. The pandemic has been an acutely difficult period for Social Workers, enhanced further by staff being required to perform their duties (e.g. undertaking visits) at risk to their own health. Whilst additional support and training to promote staff safety, resilience and wellbeing has been provided, the impact of COVID-19 cannot be overstated. The panel acknowledges and appreciates that throughout the pandemic, staff have performed above and beyond their requirements.
35. The panel heard that, as was predicted following the lockdowns and restrictions of the last year, emerging from the early acute stage of the pandemic has resulted in staff confronting a rising referral rate. This has been compounded by the identified recruitment and retention challenges.
36. Over the past year, staff morale and workloads have been monitored closely; work will be undertaken to help secure staff recruitment and retention and the department's ability to continue to improve practice and meet statutory guidelines. It is essential that a whole system approach is taken when looking at staffing across the department, as staff shortages in one area impact upon the flow of work within other areas. The panel heard of the evolving expectations around supporting vulnerable individuals and work taking place around the department's Access, Safeguarding, Forensic, Learning Disability, Transitions, Older Persons' Mental Health and Locality Teams.
37. There are a number of factors that make social work a more complicated profession than it may have been in previous years. For example, the accumulation of recommendations from safeguarding adults reviews means work is being undertaken with a larger cohort of higher risk individuals, which can be stressful for the staff involved. The panel recognises that the profession is becoming increasingly challenging and there is no single answer to addressing the recruitment and retention issues that have been raised. However, this is a national matter and not one confined solely to Middlesbrough.

38. A further additional pressure relates to the position of other partner agencies that the Council works with. For example, in relation to statutory services, the panel understands that staffing and recruitment pressures are currently being experienced by Cleveland Police and the NHS. In relation to non-statutory providers, some organisations have greater flexibility around the cessation of certain lines of activity, which can reduce the availability of the services required by the Council's clients.

TERM OF REFERENCE D:

To examine potential solutions and effective interventions that will address recruitment and retention problems.

39. The panel is of the view that a number of elements require consideration in developing a response to the identified recruitment and retention issues. It is unlikely that a single measure will resolve the challenge on its own; rather a combination of measures will need to be explored.

Remuneration

40. The panel has considered the potential for increasing the current starting salary for NQSWs in order to bring it in line with other Local Authorities. However, it is understood that this would prove extremely complex from a Human Resources perspective owing to the Single Status Agreement and the relationship between different job roles, such as Occupational Therapy, that have been evaluated as drawing equivalent salaries. Therefore, this may not be a practical solution.

41. In order to succeed in an increasingly competitive local market, consideration could be given to offering a financial incentive (i.e. "Golden Hello / Handshake") to attract Social Workers. For example: a one off on-boarding recruitment payment to newly qualified and experienced Social Workers joining Middlesbrough's Adult Social Care could be offered, which would be paid upon completion of a probationary period. However, the panel is mindful that existing staff would not be eligible for this payment.

42. 'Recruitment and Retention Payments' recognise the need to pay a market supplement for staff groups where there is an established shortage, and recruitment attempts have been unsuccessful. In order to reward and retain the existing workforce in line with this policy, relevant staff would be asked to sign-up to a retention agreement for a specified period of time. In return, staff would receive a percentage of their annual salary at the beginning of the period.

43. The panel feels that, whilst it is important, remuneration is only one element of recruitment and retention: career development and opportunities for staff are also key.

Departmental Structure and Career Progression

44. Following the information provided under Term of Reference B, the panel feels that now would be an appropriate time to revisit some of the current departmental structure.

45. With regards to the terminology around Social Worker positions, the panel supports the view that the term 'unqualified' can be unfair because there are individuals who have acquired other qualifications and significant experience and, although not qualified in social work, have supported the department for many years.

46. It was indicated to the panel that, going forward, even if recruitment were to increase, given the national shortage of Social Workers it is likely that the department will have to operate with fewer numbers of them. One possible response to this would be to recruit a larger number of Social Care Workers and restructure the teams to create more sub-teams within the existing teams' structures. A Social Worker could potentially supervise a small group of Social Care Workers who would undertake an extended range of tasks. This would require a review and restructuring of the department and would require Job Evaluating Social Care Workers, as well as giving consideration to supporting Social Workers' training and developing and linking job grades to offer clear career progression.
47. The panel understands that, in terms of support for Social Workers from Occupational Therapists, Middlesbrough's Occupational Therapy team comprises Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants. Occupational Therapy Assistants are remunerated broadly similar to Social Care Workers, although the roles do differ. On the other hand, there is a large overlap in the skill set of Occupational Therapists and Social Workers. Consideration is currently being given as to whether Occupational Therapists could potentially fulfil some of the roles that Social Workers undertake, in order to help alleviate some of the recruitment pressures currently being faced. However, the panel is mindful that consideration does need to be given to the impact of any changes on the substantial roles that Occupational Therapists carry out, and how employment terms and conditions may change as a result.

Social Work Apprenticeship

48. As noted previously (paragraph 20), the Council has recently launched a Social Work Apprenticeship scheme in partnership with Sunderland University. The scheme enables 'unqualified' Social Care staff to obtain a Social Work Degree, over a period of three years. During this time, they are able to continue in their substantive post. Whilst the department is hoping to expand the Social Work Apprenticeship, this is not a quick fix and other solutions will need to be pursued in order to meet the staffing requirements of the service in the interim period.

Agency Staff

49. As noted previously (paragraph 31), a repeat of a managed social work team solution is currently being explored to provide a short-term response to the current recruitment difficulties. However, this is a more expensive solution and would therefore be minimised.

Partnership Working

50. The panel feels that partnership working is important in addressing some of the issues being raised. There is scope for further work between partners in order to progress this, for example, by opening up discussion further with statutory and non-statutory partners to ensure that shared resources are being effectively utilised. Members are hopeful that the impending Health and Social Care Bill will provide a positive starting point to assist with this.

CONCLUSIONS

51. The Scrutiny Panel reached the following conclusions in respect of its investigation:

52. This is a complex issue that is facing Local Authorities nationally, although there is an acute shortage of Social Workers within the North East. Through a multitude of varying factors, including an ageing workforce, COVID-19 and increasing challenges to the profession, issues regarding recruitment and retention have come to the forefront. Unfortunately, it appears there is no 'quick fix' solution to addressing those issues that have been raised.
53. Remuneration packages are not the only concern in addressing recruitment and retention issues; training opportunities and career progression are as equally important.
54. In order to meet the challenges as described in this report, changes may be required to the current structure of the Adult Social Care department.
55. Partnership and collaborative working is crucial in addressing some of the issues raised in terms of staff shortages and maximising shared resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

56. It became apparent during the investigation that there is no one direct solution to addressing the recruitment and retention issues raised in this report. This is a national issue and one that will not be easily resolved. However, as a result of the information received, and based on the conclusions above, the panel's recommendations for consideration are as follows:

**TO BE DETERMINED BY
THE ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND
SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
ON 8 DECEMBER 2021**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

57. The Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel would like to thank Erik Scollay, Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration, and representatives of Human Resources for their assistance with this work.

ACRONYMS

58. A-Z listing of acronyms used in the report:
- ASC – Adult Social Care;
 - ASYE – Assessed and Supported Year in Employment;
 - DoLS – Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards; and
 - NQSW – Newly-Qualified Social Worker.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

59. The following sources were consulted, or referred to, in preparing this report:

- Minutes of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 10 November 2021; and informal briefing paper provided to Members.
- Middlesbrough Council, 2021, '*Strategic Plan 2021-2024*', Middlesbrough, UK.
- NHS, 2021, '*Social Worker*', www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/social-worker - accessed 17 November 2021.
- Prospects, 2021, '*Job Profile: Social Worker*', <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/social-worker> - accessed 17 November 2021.
- Skills for Care, 2021a, '*Headline Social Worker Statistics: Adult Social Care Workforce Dataset (ASC-WDS)*', www.SkillsforCare.org.uk - accessed 27 October 2021.
- Skills for Care, 2021b, '*Overview of the ASYE*', <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Learning-development/social-work/asye-child-family/Overview-of-the-ASYE.aspx> - accessed 17 November 2021.
- Skills for Care, 2021c, '*The ASYE for Adult Services*', <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Learning-development/social-work/asye-adults/The-Assessed-and-Supported-Year-in-Employment-Adults.aspx> - accessed 17 November 2021.

**COUNCILLOR JIM PLATT
CHAIR OF THE ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL –
2021/2022**

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership of the Scrutiny Panel for 2021/2022 is as follows:

Councillors J Platt (Chair), G Wilson (Vice-Chair), D Coupe, D Davison, T Higgins (part year), D Jones, G Purvis, D Rooney, Z Uddin (part year) and J Walker.

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Appendix 1 – Recruitment Advert Comparison Table (Jobs North East - 24 November 2021)

Authority	Position	Salary	Benefits
Darlington	SOCIAL WORKER (POST-ASYE)	Full time equivalent salary (pro-rata for part-time hours) - Band 9 (£28,672 - £31,346) / Band 10 (£32,234 - £34,728 per annum) / Band 11 (£35,745 - £38,890 per annum)	<p><i>“As an Adults social worker in Darlington, you can expect to be fully supported on your development journey by robust caseload management, regular supervision and appraisal, outstanding training and development opportunities, an excellent total reward package including competitive salary, 31 days annual leave and a wide range of employee benefits promoting wellbeing. Our recently enhanced career and pay progression scheme offers a clear growth and development pathway accompanied by competitive pay at each progression level, which reflects the increased complexity of the role and the experience required from our social workers.</i></p> <p><i>Our employee offer includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>31 days Annual Leave plus Bank Holidays, with option to purchase additional Annual Leave (pro-rata for part time working)</i> • <i>Access to the Local Government Pension Scheme with option to make Additional Voluntary Contributions</i> • <i>Flexi-time scheme</i> • <i>Enhanced Maternity/Paternity and Adoption Leave payments</i> • <i>Green Car Leasing Scheme</i> • <i>Access to a wide range of training, learning and development</i> • <i>Access to free physiotherapy sessions</i> • <i>Access to free, confidential counselling</i> • <i>First class health and wellbeing initiatives</i> • <i>Cycle to Work Scheme in partnership with Halfords</i> • <i>Reduced cost membership for the Dolphin Centre’s Fit for Life Package</i> • <i>Season ticket car parking permits or subsidised Town Centre parking permits subject to criteria</i> • <i>Discounted Arriva Travel Pass</i> • <i>Access to Childcare Vouchers scheme subject to criteria.”</i>
Gateshead	SOCIAL WORKER (AMHP)	£37,890 - £40,876	<p><i>“We have excellent legal support in Gateshead council and provide AMHP refresher training and an opportunity to meet with regional AMHPs.</i></p>

			<i>Gateshead also has a dedicated AMHP forum and individual supervision is provided. Gateshead is committed to ongoing training and development and quality improvement."</i>
Gateshead	ADULT SOCIAL CARE – SOCIAL WORKER	Grade I/J- (£32,234 - £37,890)	<i>'Opportunities for continuous professional development and relevant training.'</i>
Middlesbrough	SOCIAL WORKER	£27,041 - £33,782 pro rata 30 hrs week / 12 months	<i>"Middlesbrough Council is an exciting and rewarding place to work. We have strong Council Values that underpin every aspect of the council and the services we provide. New staff joining Middlesbrough can expect a welcome induction from the Chief Executive as well as a full induction programme within the team. Middlesbrough Council offer superb training and development opportunities via our online training portal and through our workforce development lead. For ASYE social workers we provide a high level of support to staff with experienced social workers providing regular and tailored guidance and input with regular staff catch ups and development sessions. As a service we are also committed to supporting our staff and providing a healthy work culture. Staff have access to regular supervisions as well as other staff support forums. We will support you by providing regular supervision and access to training."</i>
Newcastle	SOCIAL WORKER	£33,782 - £37,890 per annum	None identified.
Northumberland	ADULTS SOCIAL WORKER	£32,910-£36,922	<i>"We have some outstanding benefits to offer you, including:</i>
Northumberland	CONSULTANT SOCIAL WORKER	£37,890-41,881 (Pro Rota) – 14.8 hrs per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• 25 days annual leave plus public and bank holidays (rising to 30 after 5 years of service)(pro-rata for part-time employees)</i> <i>• Automatic enrolment into the Local Government Pension Scheme</i> <i>• Flexi scheme applicable to majority of roles</i> <i>• Local government discount schemes available to all employees with offers at local businesses along with various national brands</i> <i>• A commitment to work-life balance offering flexibility through various schemes including job sharing, home working, flexible working, part-year working, and compressed hours</i> <i>• Car Leasing Scheme."</i>

Northumberland	CARE MANAGER 3 / SOCIAL WORKER (AMHP).	£37,890-£41,881	<p><i>“With excellent training and great benefits, Northumberland County Council is the ideal place to progress your career. At Northumberland, we support our AMHPs to ensure they have the resources and environment they need to make a real difference.</i></p> <p><i>To support you in your AMHP role you will receive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• 1 to 1 supervision</i> <i>• Access to NCC AMHP Forums, for peer group discussion & intervention</i> <i>• An AMHP mentor to provide additional support in your first year of employment</i> <i>• 18 hours (3 days) of AMHP approval training in each year</i> <i>• A structured induction service</i> <i>• Access to our Mental Health Social Worker/Lead AMHP to support and develop your social work practice</i> <i>• Access to protected time each year to work on your professional portfolio (Social Work England registration)</i> <i>• Opportunity to be involved in the practice education of social workers and AMHPs undertaking professional training</i> <i>• Access to NCC training programmes.”</i>
North Tyneside	<p>SOCIAL WORKERS</p> <p>Posts available as follows:</p> <p>2 x Social Worker - 37 hours per week - permanent - Grade 9 Community Learning Disability Team part of the Whole Life Disability Service</p>	£27,741 - £35,745 pa	<p><i>“Successful applicants will receive a planned induction, regular supervision, will benefit from good peer support, will have opportunities to develop a good work/life balance through the use of the flexi system, and will have access to an excellent range of in house and bespoke training in addition to joint training with health colleagues.</i></p> <p><i>Newly qualified staff will undergo the ASYE programme and have access to a range of learning and training opportunities to enhance their professional development and career opportunities. Regular input is provided for Continued Professional Development throughout your career with our Teams.</i></p>

	<p>1 x Social Worker Gateway - 37 hours per week - permanent - Grade 8/9</p> <p>1 x Social Worker Gateway - 37 hours per week - fixed term - Grade 8/9</p> <p>1 x Social Worker Grade - 18.5 hours per week - permanent - Grade 8/9 Community Well Being Team Coastal and Central</p> <p>1 x Social Worker Grade - 18.5 hours per week - permanent - Grade 8/9 Community Well Being Team North West.</p> <p>You will be appointed to Grade 8 or 9 depending on your qualifications and experience. Grade 8 - £27,741 - £31,346 pa Grade 9 - £32,234 - £35,745 pa</p>		<p><i>As an employee of North Tyneside Council you will feel valued from the moment you join us. We have a comprehensive induction process to ensure you are supported in your role from day one and our experienced and approachable management team will support you to achieve your professional goals.</i></p> <p><i>In return for your valuable contribution you will have access to our excellent benefits package:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (for contracts of 3 months or more)</i> • <i>A supportive Occupational Sick Pay scheme</i> • <i>A generous annual leave allowance, which increases with service, plus bank holidays</i> • <i>Annual pay increments up to the top of the salary grade for Grades 2-11 (ONLY FOR GREEN BOOK ROLES)</i> • <i>A range of flexible working and leave options, including part-time working, to support work/life balance (subject to business requirements)</i> • <i>Access to Occupational Health services including physiotherapy and counselling</i> • <i>Our Employee Assistance Programme which includes a telephone helpline and extensive online resources for support and advice</i> • <i>Extensive training and development opportunities including access to our Learning Pool online platform</i> • <i>Supported career progression</i> • <i>Discounted membership of our Leisure Centres including 5 gyms; 4 pools; 2 spas and over 250 classes every week</i> • <i>The 'Benefits Plus' Scheme enabling salary sacrifice for Car Leasing; Cycle to Work Scheme; additional annual leave, public transport season tickets, and professional subscriptions</i> • <i>Credit Union Savings Scheme</i> <p><i>Attractive ASYE programme and commitment to increased supervision and reduced caseload in first year."</i></p>
North Tyneside	PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER (ADULTS)	£47,672 pa	<p><i>"We have a well-established programme of CPD support and you'll be given free access to range of online and face to face resources to help you evidence and develop your ongoing skills and practice; this is underpinned by a strong ethos of succession planning to support practitioners with career progression."</i></p>

Redcar & Cleveland	SOCIAL WORKER (HOSPITAL TEAM)	£27,741 - £35,745 per annum based on experience	<p><i>“Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• We provide regular professional supervision and implement a workload management system.</i> <i>• We have a robust training unit, which includes opportunities for structured career progression.</i> <i>• You will receive a generous annual leave entitlement of up to 33 days.</i> <p><i>The council is an accredited Investors in People employer at gold level and holds ambassador status for the North East Better Health at Work Award.</i></p> <p><i>We offer very attractive terms and conditions of employment, including generous annual leave entitlement, flexible working hours (where appropriate), membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme and access to numerous other salary sacrifice schemes and staff benefits/discounts, including a lease car scheme.”</i></p>
South Tyneside	EXPERIENCED MENTAL HEALTH SOCIAL WORKER (NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM)	£32,910 - £37,890 (Bar at £33,782 & £35,745 pa)	None identified
South Tyneside	EXPERIENCED SOCIAL WORKER WITH A 6-MONTH SECONDMENT INTO THE ROLE OF ADVANCED PRACTITIONER (NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM)	Experienced Social Worker Salary: £33,782 to £37,890 pa Career Grade (bar at £33,782 & £35,745) Advanced Practitioner Salary: £40,876 pa	<i>“We will offer you a permanent Social Worker role, which includes a 6-month secondment into an Advanced Practitioner role and the opportunity to develop your PQ qualifications to enable you to apply for a permanent Advanced Practitioner role.”</i>
South Tyneside	SOCIAL WORKER	£30,451 to £37,890 pa Career Grade (Bar at £32,234 & £33,782 & £35,745)	<i>“We remain fully committed to supporting our staff to grow and develop, and we will provide you with the opportunity to use your skills and learn new ones. Through the development of our new Values and Behaviour Framework we will fully support staff to become Curious, Accountable, Responsive and Empowered (CARE).”</i>

South Tyneside	EXPERIENCED SOCIAL WORKER(S) (ALL TEAMS – NEIGHBOURHOOD; HOSPITAL DISCHARGE; LEARNING DISABILITY)	Career Grade - £32,910 to £37,890 (Bar at £33,782 & £35,745 pa)	
Stockton	HOSPITAL SOCIAL WORKER	£27,741-£39,880	<i>"We offer an excellent total reward package including a competitive salary, generous Pension Scheme and annual leave entitlement as well as access to a number of additional employee benefits and a wide range of learning and development opportunities."</i>
Stockton	SOCIAL WORKER - ADULT MENTAL HEALTH	£27,741 - £36,922	<i>"We offer continuous professional development, regular supervision and annual appraisal."</i>
Stockton	FIRST CONTACT SOCIAL WORKER	£27,741-£36,922	<i>"We offer a supportive environment and are committed to continuous professional development with regular supervision and annual appraisal."</i>
Stockton	SOCIAL WORKER - ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT PLANNING	£27,741-£39,880 pro rata Hours per week: 18.5	<i>"We offer a supportive team environment; we are committed to continuous professional development and offer regular supervision and annual appraisal. This post has been identified as suitable for flexible working which enables the postholder to work 40% of their working time away from the office."</i>
Stockton	SOCIAL WORKER (FIXED TERM)	£27,741-£39,880	<i>"We offer continuous professional development, regular supervision and annual appraisal."</i>