



# Adult Social Care

Social Worker  
Recruitment & Retention Strategy

# Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out Adult Services' approach to how we recruit and retain our social workers.

Milton Keynes City Council should be seen as an employer of choice where our colleagues reflect the diversity of our city and are respected and motivated to deliver the best services possible to the people of Milton Keynes.

We want to create a working environment where our approach and practices to social worker recruitment and retention attracts and retains highly skilled, well supported and engaged colleagues.



## City Plan and Our Values

This document is underpinned by the following principles detailed in our Council Plan 2022-26:

- Ambitious in what we do
- Opportunity for all
- Supporting vulnerable people
- Prevention is better than cure
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion

We are Dedicated  
We are Respectful  
We are Collaborative  
We are Milton Keynes Council



We expect all colleagues at Milton Keynes City Council to know and work to our values.

## Our Strategy

We have set out our recruitment and retention strategy under the following headings:

### Recruitment

To attract sufficient permanent, high quality social workers with the right values, qualifications and experience.

### Retention

To retain existing colleagues by supporting them to carry out their roles to a high standard, by ensuring that we offer competitive pay and benefits for new and existing colleagues, and by providing the best possible working experience, including sustaining manageable caseloads.

### Career Development

Providing career development at all levels from our apprentices to our managers.

# Recruitment

We want candidates to clearly see what sets us apart from other local authorities and why they would want to work for us.

We have a dedicated landing page for our social work recruitment and we also use social media to promote our opportunities. We also share the experiences of our social workers with candidates, helping them to get a feel for what its like to be a social worker at Milton Keynes City Council.

We aim to make the application process as simple and timely as possible. We also offer an apply any time option.

We work closely with our HR and Communications colleagues to ensure that our content remains fresh and that our offer remains competitive.

We use Values Based Recruitment to assess our applicants to ensure our new colleagues share the same values and approach as ourselves.

Our management teams work closely with HR to ensure our approach to recruitment is achieving the required results.

**“We’re passionate about supporting people to live the lives they want”**

Our social workers say...




I get to advocate for adults with disabilities which means I'm often a voice for vulnerable people. It's very satisfying to be a positive force in their lives.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)




Our social workers say...



My work is very fast paced and exciting with no two days the same. It can be challenging but our team is like a family and help is always there.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)



Our social workers say...



I've worked in other Local Authorities and Milton Keynes is one step ahead. We have great managers who listen and excellent specialist services.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)



# Retention

We understand that to retain our social workers we need to ensure that we provide a supportive working environment where we continue to uphold professional standards, provide clarity and full understanding of the expectations and requirements of the role, and offer a competitive rewards package.

## The Working Experience

We want to ensure a quality working experience for our social workers by providing the following:

- A quality first day experience followed by thorough induction
- A comprehensive programme of training and support
- Practice expectations are communicated and understood
- Regular quality supervision, with the emphasis on reflective practice
- A clear and transparent career path progression
- Appropriate caseloads for the level of experience
- Opportunities for reflection and open discussion
- Ensuring quality communication from our leadership team
- Career and succession planning
- A culture of reflection and learning through the use of Exit Interviews and colleague surveys

## Reward Package

As part of our recruitment and retention strategy we will continually review our total reward package.

We are committed to a salary offer that is competitive. We do this by an annual pay review. As part of this work we will also monitor and review the necessity for additional payments including golden hellos and market supplements.

We pay for our social worker's professional registration fees.

We will continue to enhance and promote other benefits including our exceptional pension scheme.

## Health and Wellbeing

We understand the importance of providing support and resources to promote resilience and well-being. We are committed to providing a range of support and guidance to ensure that colleagues are able to seek the appropriate level of support, should they need to. This includes:

- MKCC Employee Assistance Programme
- Health Champions
- A variety of Health and Wellbeing Workshops

# Career Development

We recognise that the most effective way to ensure healthy levels of social workers in our teams in the long term is by investing in 'growing our own' and offering a clear career pathway. We also understand that its good to bring in new people with fresh ideas.

## Career Progression Framework

We recently developed and implemented our new career progression framework to create long term stability in the social worker workforce by creating opportunities for progression and supporting professional development. The framework is based on the Professional Capabilities Framework.

The framework also ensures that our social workers understand what is expected of them but it underpins our vision to develop a culture of quality practice.

The framework details how we support our ASYE social workers and provides structure to ensure all of our social workers can advance their practice and careers.

## Apprentices and Students

Each year we support a fresh intake of social work apprentices. We have invested in our own practice educator support to provide a nurturing environment for our apprentices and to also support student placements. We also provide formal development for experienced social workers by supporting them to undertake practice educator, best interest assessor and AMHP training.



Esther

Social Worker  
Older People's Assessment Team

Our social workers say...

Our managers are really encouraging and want us to progress. I've been able to take on new opportunities and really widen my experience.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)



Bryan

Practice Educator

Our social workers say...

The training I've received has been excellent. I'm now a qualified Approved Mental Health Professional and Best Interest Assessor thanks to the support from my colleagues.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)



# Delivering our Strategy

We use our Leadership Team and Assurance Board to oversee the delivery of our strategy. We use action plans to implement each work stream.

## Governance

The recruitment and retention of social care workforce is an essential part of the Council's business and our challenges in this regard have led to its inclusion in our Corporate Risk Register.

## Measuring our Success

The success of the strategy will be measured based on a range of quantitative and qualitative measures.

### Quantitative Measures

- Reduction in the number of agency workers occupying permanent posts
- Number of apprentices enrolling and completing the degree programme
- Number of ASYE's completing their first year
- Number of ASYE progressing to G Grade roles
- Number of G Grade Social Workers progressing to H Grade
- A reduction in turnover at G and H Grade
- Supporting colleagues who wish to obtain manager roles

### Quantitative Measures

- Colleague Surveys
- Feedback including exit interviews and Social Worker Reference Group etc.



**Ragavi**  
Social Worker  
Assessment Team

Our social workers say...

My manager understands my needs as a person as well as a professional, which allows me to have a good work-life balance.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)



**Claire**  
Deputy Manager  
Mental Health Social Care Team

Our social workers say...

Over the past four years, I've received so much support to progress my career and follow my dreams.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)



**Billy**  
Social Worker  
Mental Health and Rough Sleepers

Our social workers say...

I've been able to complete a Masters degree whilst working here, alongside access to excellent in-house training to help me develop my career.

[www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk](http://www.mkcounciljobs.org.uk)

