

MEDWAY'S ADULT SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE STRATEGY

2025 - 2028

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Executive Summary

Adult Social Care in Medway is operating in an increasingly challenging environment, shaped by rising demand, growing complexity, financial pressure and heightened regulatory expectations. Delivering safe, timely and person-centred support depends fundamentally on having a stable, skilled and confident workforce.

This Workforce Strategy sets out how Adult Social Care will stabilise, develop and futureproof its workforce between 2025 and 2028, enabling better outcomes for residents and a more supportive, sustainable working environment for staff. It is a critical enabler of the Adult Social Care Strategy, the CQC Improvement Plan and the Transformation and Improvement Programme.

The top five workforce challenges

The strategy focuses on addressing five workforce problems that currently present the greatest risk to service quality, sustainability and improvement:



High reliance on agency staff

- Leading to instability, higher costs, reduced continuity for residents and increased pressure on permanent staff



Gaps in skills, confidence and digital capability

- Particularly in the use of digital tools, data, emerging practice areas and complex decision making



An ageing workforce with limited succession planning

- Creating risk to specialist roles, leadership capability and the retention of organisational knowledge



Unequal access to progression and mixed experiences of inclusion

- Affecting retention, morale, trust and the ability to develop future leaders from across the workforce



Consistency of leadership visibility and communication

- Limiting alignment, confidence, pace of improvement and shared ownership of change

Our strategic focus

While the strategy sets out six interconnected workforce priorities, it deliberately prioritises workforce stabilisation, core capability and decision quality. These areas present the most immediate risk to service performance, timeliness and statutory compliance and will therefore receive focused attention.

The six priorities are:

1. Workforce Capability and Confidence
2. Ethical Practice and Human Rights
3. Inclusion, Diversity and Cultural Competence
4. Recruitment, Retention and Wellbeing
5. Leadership and Culture
6. Data, Intelligence and Impact

What will be different in three years for staff and residents

By 2028, Adult Social Care will be operating in a materially different way.



How delivery will be assured

Delivery of this strategy will be managed through the Adult Social Care Transformation and Improvement Programme, with named senior ownership for each priority, clear governance, and active management of capacity, risk and dependencies. Progress will be monitored through a robust Measuring Effectiveness and Impact framework, ensuring the focus remains on tangible improvements for residents and staff.

Introduction

At Medway we are ambitious for our people. Medway is committed to ensuring its people thrive in the place they live and work. A thriving and skilled social care workforce means a better quality of life and positives outcomes for Medway's adults and their Carers.

We are proud of our workforce, and this Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy is all about ensuring we have the right people in the right place at the right time with the values, skills, and adaptability to deliver care and support now and in the future, as part of a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.

Medway Council's 'People Strategy' recognises our need to respond to demographic change and achieve long-term financial sustainability across the health and care system. To achieve this, we recognise the greater need for creativity and working with partners to develop shared outcomes. We recognise that our workforce is key to the delivery of our Adult Social Care Offer in Medway.

This strategy is underpinned by Medway Council's core values and behaviours, which define how we work and what we stand for. We are collaborative, working together as One Medway; ambitious, bold and innovative in our approach; trusted, open and accountable; respectful of our diversity and heritage; caring and compassionate towards our communities and colleagues; and proud of the work we do and the place we serve. These values guide our workforce culture and shape the way we deliver adult social care across Medway.

[One Medway Plan](#)



Jackie Brown

Assistant Director, Adult Social Care

Aims of the Strategy

This Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy focuses on Medway Council's internal Adult Social Care workforce, encompassing all staff within the Adult Social Care Division. It is also a statement of our workforce priorities and the action we will take to deliver those priorities.

Medway has a growing and diverse population, and our workforce needs to grow and adapt in response to the residents we support.

The strategy aims to attract, retain, and continually develop a talented, adaptable, and inclusive workforce that is proud to work for Medway. We aim to build a workforce that is equipped for digital transformation, regulatory compliance, and integrated ways of working. It focuses on building stability, addressing workforce ageing through succession planning, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement to meet rising demand and financial challenges. Above all, this strategy is about enabling every member of our workforce to improve people's lives, whether through direct care, operational support, or strategic planning, delivering high quality, person-centred care that promotes independence, dignity, and wellbeing.

Medway's Adult Social Care Workforce Action Plan is part of a broader improvement strategy aimed at enhancing the quality and effectiveness of services for adults. The plan also includes specific actions and timelines to address these priorities, with a focus on achieving sustainable improvements and positive outcomes. The action plan is aligned to our key priorities and outlines key activities to enhance and develop the Adult Social Care workforce.

This Workforce Strategy is a critical enabler of Medway's Adult Social Care Strategy, CQC Improvement Plan, and Transformation and Improvement Programme. There is no transformation without workforce transformation; our ability to deliver better outcomes, embrace digital innovation, and embed strengths-based, person-centred practice depends on a skilled, motivated, and future-ready workforce.

Alignment with Wider Strategies

This Workforce Strategy is a cornerstone of Medway's Adult Social Care Improvement journey. It underpins and enables the ambitions set out in:

Adult Social Care Strategy

Our Adult Social Care Strategy commits to helping people live safely, stay independent, and be treated with dignity and respect through responsive, person-centred care. Delivering this vision requires a workforce that is skilled, confident, and adaptable. This strategy ensures our people have the capabilities to embed prevention, co-production,

and inclusive practice, while embracing innovation and technology to improve outcomes.

This strategy is part of the One Medway approach, working together across teams and communities.

CQC Improvement Plan

Our CQC Improvement Plan sets clear expectations for timeliness, quality, and safeguarding. Workforce development is critical to meeting these standards. This strategy prioritises recruitment, retention, and professional development to reduce delays, strengthen safeguarding practice, and improve consistency across all teams.

Transformation and Improvement Programme

There is no transformation without workforce transformation. Our Programme aims to modernise services, leverage technology, and embed a culture of continuous improvement. This Workforce Strategy prepares our staff for these changes by developing digital skills, data literacy, and agile working practices, ensuring our workforce is future-ready and equipped to deliver innovative, person-centred solutions.

Every improvement we make, whether in service design, digital innovation, or partnership working, depends on the people delivering care and support. By aligning workforce priorities with these wider strategies, we ensure that transformation is sustainable, inclusive, and impactful.

The Strategic Workforce Context

Background

Adult Social Care is operating in a rapidly changing environment shaped by national policy, regulatory expectations, and local improvement priorities. The Care Act 2014 places clear duties on councils to promote wellbeing, prevent needs from escalating, and deliver person-centred care. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance Framework now requires local authorities to evidence strong leadership, timely assessments, safeguarding, and continuous improvement. National policy also emphasises integration with health, digital transformation, and tackling health inequalities.

Locally, Medway is on an improvement journey following a CQC rating of 'Requires Improvement'. Significant investment of £2.4 million in 2024/25 has been made to strengthen staffing and service delivery. Our Transformation and Improvement Programme sets out ambitious goals for modernising services, embedding technology, and improving outcomes for residents.

Workforce is the critical enabler of this change. Without a skilled, stable, and motivated workforce, we cannot deliver the Adult Social Care Strategy, meet regulatory standards, or achieve financial sustainability. This strategy responds to workforce challenges identified through data and staff engagement: high agency reliance, an ageing profile, and the need for digital capability and inclusion. It sets out how we will attract, retain, and develop talent across all roles in the Adult Social Care Division, ensuring we have the right people, in the right place, with the right skills to deliver transformation and improve lives.

The Local and National Context

Adult Social Care in Medway is shaped by the people we serve, the communities we work with, and the challenges we face together. Medway has an estimated adult population of 223,299 and a growing older population, with projections showing significant increases in those aged 65+ by 2040. Medway is in the top 40% most densely populated local authority areas. Currently, 1 in 74 adults receives long-term care from Medway Council, reflecting the scale of need across the area.

The main reasons people receive support include:

- Physical Support (Personal Care): 57%
- Learning Disability Support: 19%
- Mental Health Support: 8%
- Memory and Cognition: 6%

Medway is becoming more diverse, with 25.7% of residents identifying as being from ethnic minority backgrounds, and the most common languages spoken (other than English) include Romanian, Polish, and Punjabi. Life expectancy in Medway remains below the national average, with the reported life expectancy in 2022 at 78.7 years for males, and 82.5 years for females. Health inequalities persist, particularly in deprived areas.

Financial pressures are significant. In 2024/25, Adult Social Care accounted for £101.5 million of Medway Council's budget, with actual spend exceeding this by £7.1 million. Costs for supported living have risen by 186% in the last five years, and residential care costs by 77%, reflecting the growing complexity and demand for services.

National Context

Across England, Adult Social Care faces significant and growing challenges. The ageing population continues to increase rapidly, driving demand for care and support at a time when resources are stretched. Workforce pressures remain acute, with a national shortage of qualified social workers and care professionals compounded by high turnover rates and reliance on agency staff. Financial sustainability is a persistent concern, as rising costs and funding constraints place local authorities under pressure to deliver efficiencies while maintaining quality standards.

Regulatory expectations have also intensified. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance framework requires councils to demonstrate strong leadership, timely assessments, robust safeguarding, and consistently person-centred care. Alongside this, national policy emphasises integration between health and social care systems, digital transformation, and the adoption of technology enabled care to improve outcomes and efficiency. There is also a growing focus on tackling health inequalities and ensuring services are inclusive and culturally competent, reflecting the diversity of communities across the country.

Why This Matters

Understanding both the local and national context is essential for workforce planning. Medway's workforce strategy must respond to:

- Local demographic trends and health inequalities
- National workforce shortages and regulatory requirements
- The need for digital skills and innovation to deliver transformation
- Financial pressures that require smarter ways of working and sustainable models of care

Medway's demographic growth, increasing complexity of need, health inequalities and financial pressures, alongside national workforce shortages and heightened regulatory expectations, require a workforce that is future-ready, digitally confident, inclusive, and

stable. The priorities in this strategy respond directly to these realities, focusing on capability and confidence, ethical practice, inclusion and cultural competence, recruitment retention and wellbeing, leadership and culture, and data intelligence and impact.

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What Our Data and Engagement Tell Us

Our Services and Workforce Today

Our Services

Medway Adult Social Care delivers a wide range of statutory and discretionary services to support adults with care and support needs, their carers, and our communities. These services work together to uphold the Care Act 2014, promote independence, and ensure safe, person-centred care. Below is an overview of our teams and their core functions.

Practice Development and Quality

Principal Social Work Team: Leads practice improvement, quality assurance and learning and development for the workforce. Oversees supervision standards, Continued Professional Development, and the Adult and Children's Development Academy.

Quality Assurance Team: Works with providers, commissioners, and CQC to maintain care quality and compliance.

Commissioning and Market Management

Adult's Partnership Commissioning: Commissions and manages contracts for accommodation, home care, and integrated health and social care services. Oversees the Better Care Fund and market shaping.

Frontline Practice and Assessment

Localities and Occupational Therapy: Locality teams across Early Help and Prevention, and Long Term Care and Support delivering Care Act assessments, Carers Assessments, early help, prevention, and enablement. Includes Occupational Therapy services for equipment and adaptations.

Integrated Hospital Discharge Team: Supports safe, timely discharge from hospital and access to care packages.

Brokerage Teams (Community and Integrated Discharge): Secures cost-effective home care, residential and nursing placements, and supported living arrangements.

Specialist Services

Safeguarding Team: Responds to concerns of abuse and neglect, undertakes enquiries, and works with partners to mitigate risk.

Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) Team: Coordinates Mental Health Act assessments with health professionals.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team: Undertakes deprivation of liberty assessments and authorisations for care homes and hospitals.

Transitions Team: Supports young people moving from Children's Services and individuals returning from secure settings.

Targeted Review Team: Completes targeted reviews of existing social care clients and supports Adult Social Care in requesting health funding for Continuing Health Care.

Medway Intensive Support Team (MIST): Provides intensive outreach for people with complex needs, using strengths-based approaches.

In House Provision

Respite Services: Registered respite services for adults with learning disabilities.

Flight Services: Supported living services helping people develop independence skills.

Shared Lives: Matches adults with disabilities to approved carers for long-term support in a family setting.

Financial Services

Financial Assessment Team: Completes financial assessments for care services and advises on contributions.

Client Financial Affairs Team: Manages finances for individuals lacking capacity.

Finance Operations Team: Oversees direct payment audits, provider payments, and invoicing.

Self Directed Support Team: Supports individuals managing care through direct payments.

Systems

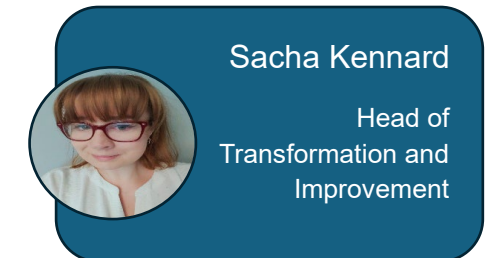
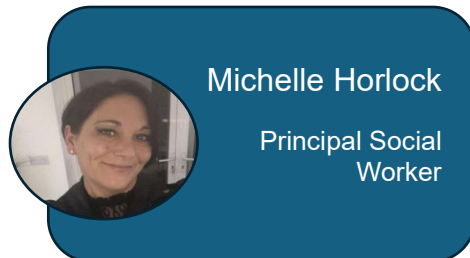
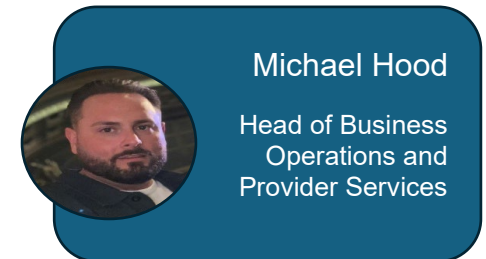
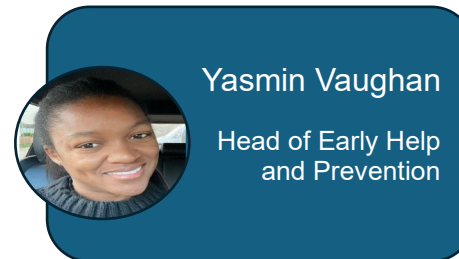
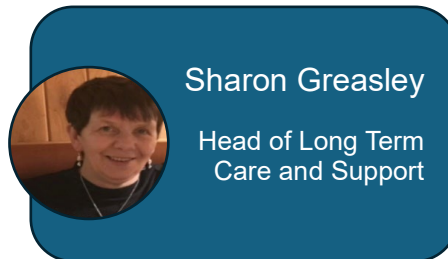
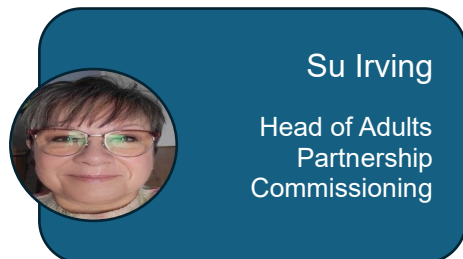
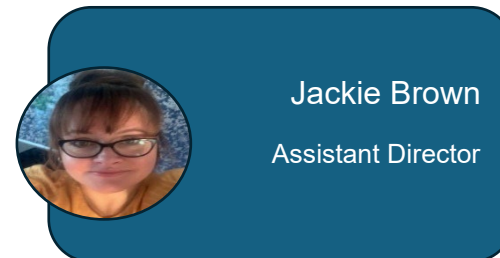
Children and Adults Systems Team: Maintains the case management system and ensures accurate records for care and payments.

Transformation, Engagement and Co-Production

Transformation and Improvement Team: Leads service redesign, CQC assurance oversight, and delivery of the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme.

Engagement Team: Develops co-production and communication strategies, ensuring people with lived experience shape services.

Our Senior Leadership Team



Adult Social Care Workforce Data

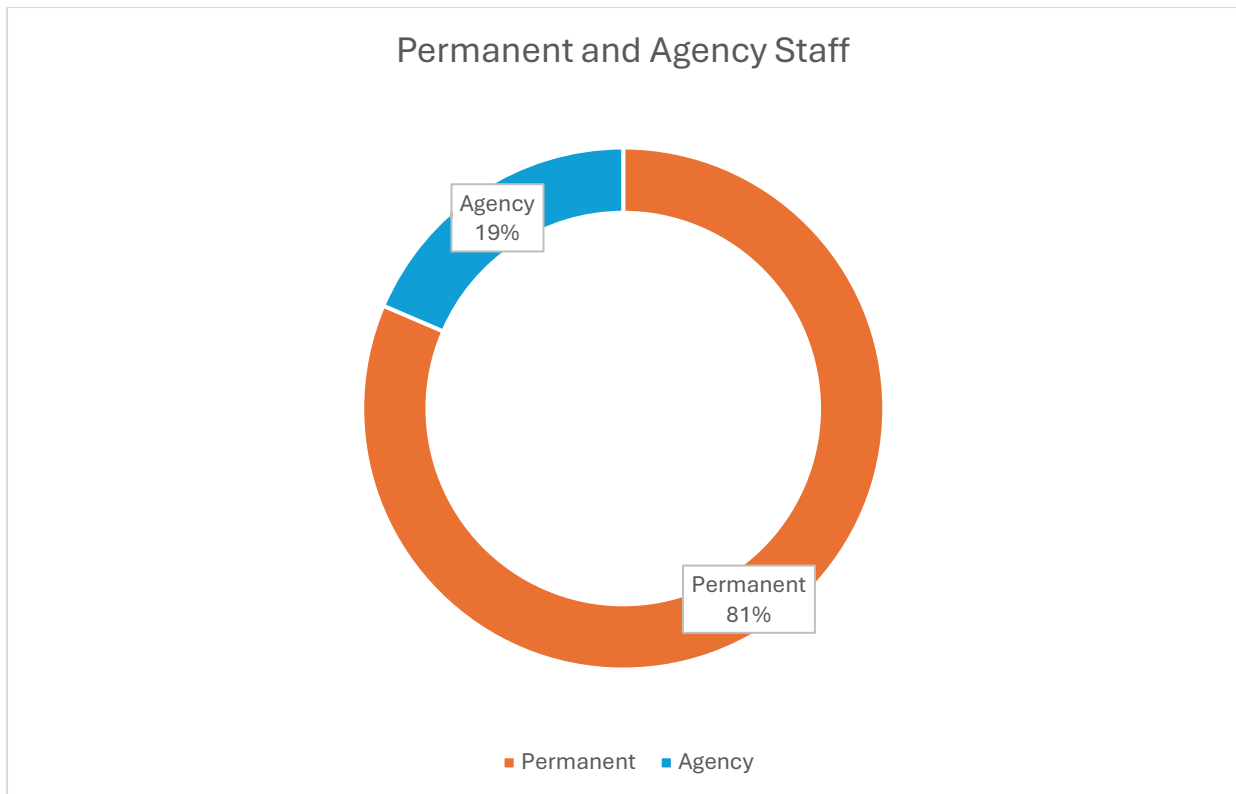
This section provides an overview of the Medway Adult Social Care workforce as of 1 April 2025. Understanding workforce composition, demographics, and diversity is critical to shaping our transformation journey. The data highlights key opportunities and challenges that influence recruitment, retention, and development strategies. It also reflects themes raised by staff, such as stability, career progression, and inclusion.

Key Workforce Risks at a Glance

Risk Area	What the Data Shows	Why It Matters
High agency workforce reliance (18.6%)	Agency use higher than national average (15%); agency used to fill new posts	Impacts stability, continuity, cost, and team cohesion
Workforce stability and turnover (8.7%)	Turnover at 8.7% for 2024/25	Disruption to improvement work; affects service continuity and staff morale
Ageing workforce	Nearly 50% aged 40-59	Raised retirement risk; risk of loss of expertise; succession gap
Gender imbalance (83% women)	Higher than national figure (80%)	Limits diversity of perspectives; may reduce attraction to underrepresented groups
Progression and inclusion concerns	Raised consistently in staff feedback; minority groups present but not fully represented in senior roles	Affects retention, engagement, and organisational culture
Disability disclosure (9.2%)	Unknown how many staff choose not to declare	Potential under reporting limits ability to design inclusive support
Succession planning gaps	Themes raised by staff; supported by age profile	Risk of losing critical skills without a pipeline

Adult Social Care Staffing

The total establishment for Adult Social Care is 321.31 Full Time Equivalent (FTE), this is broken down for permanent and agency staff as below. Agency staff are used to fill new posts while permanent recruitment gets underway.



This high agency rate indicates a potential reliance on temporary staff, which could affect stability and continuity; an area flagged by staff as a concern for workload and team cohesion. Current data highlights particular pressure points in agency usage within DoLS, Safeguarding, hospital discharge, and some Locality Teams. These areas reflect present demand and workforce challenges, and therefore may shift over time. This presents an opportunity to strengthen recruitment and retention strategies across the Division to reduce agency dependency improve resilience, and support longer term workforce stability.

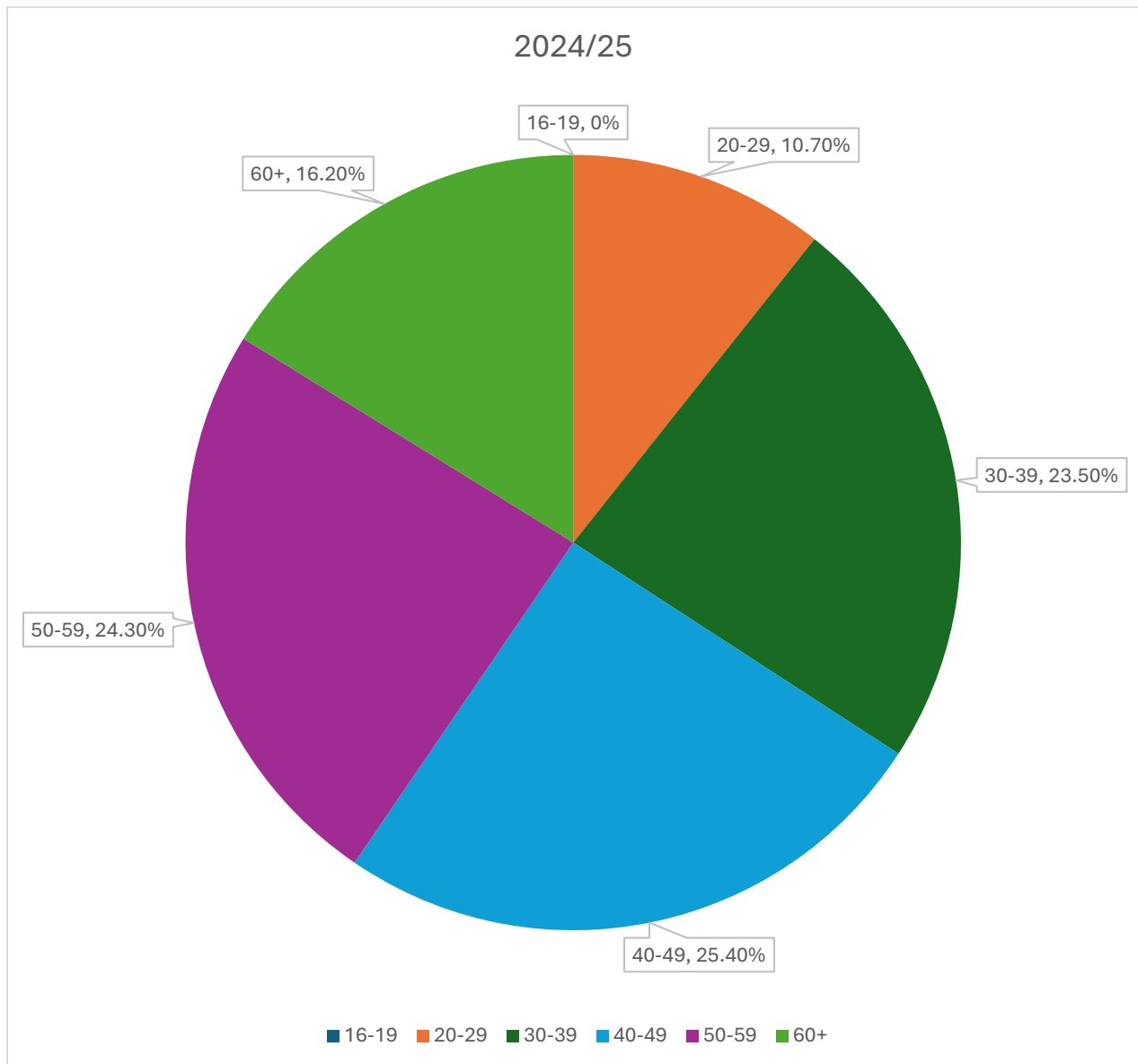
Staff Turnover

Staff turnover for Adult Social Care in the 2024/25 financial year was 8.7%. Stability of the workforce is an area for improvement for the Division, impacting on the sustainability of improvement.

Equality Profiles

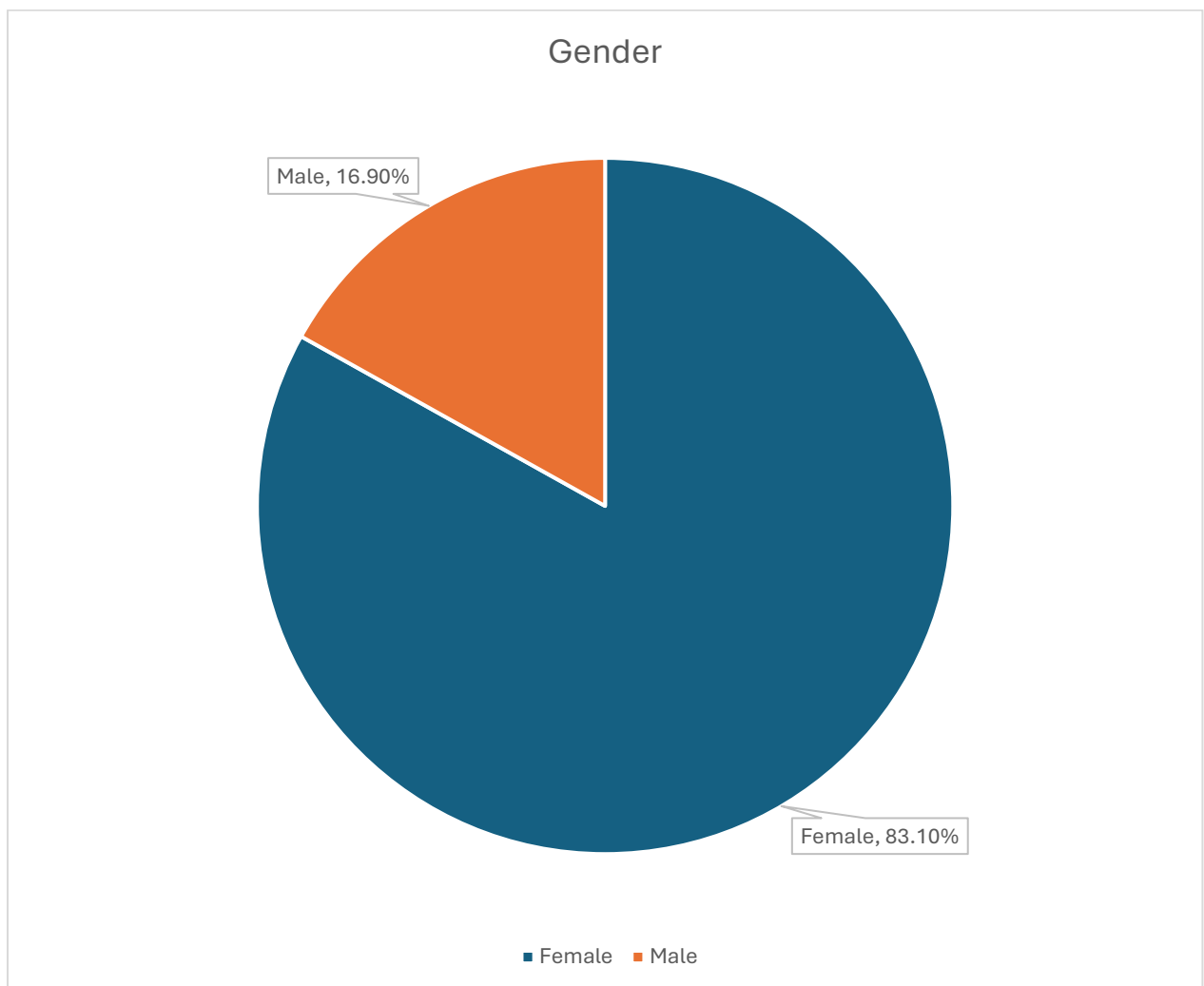
The data below excludes agency workers.

Age Profile



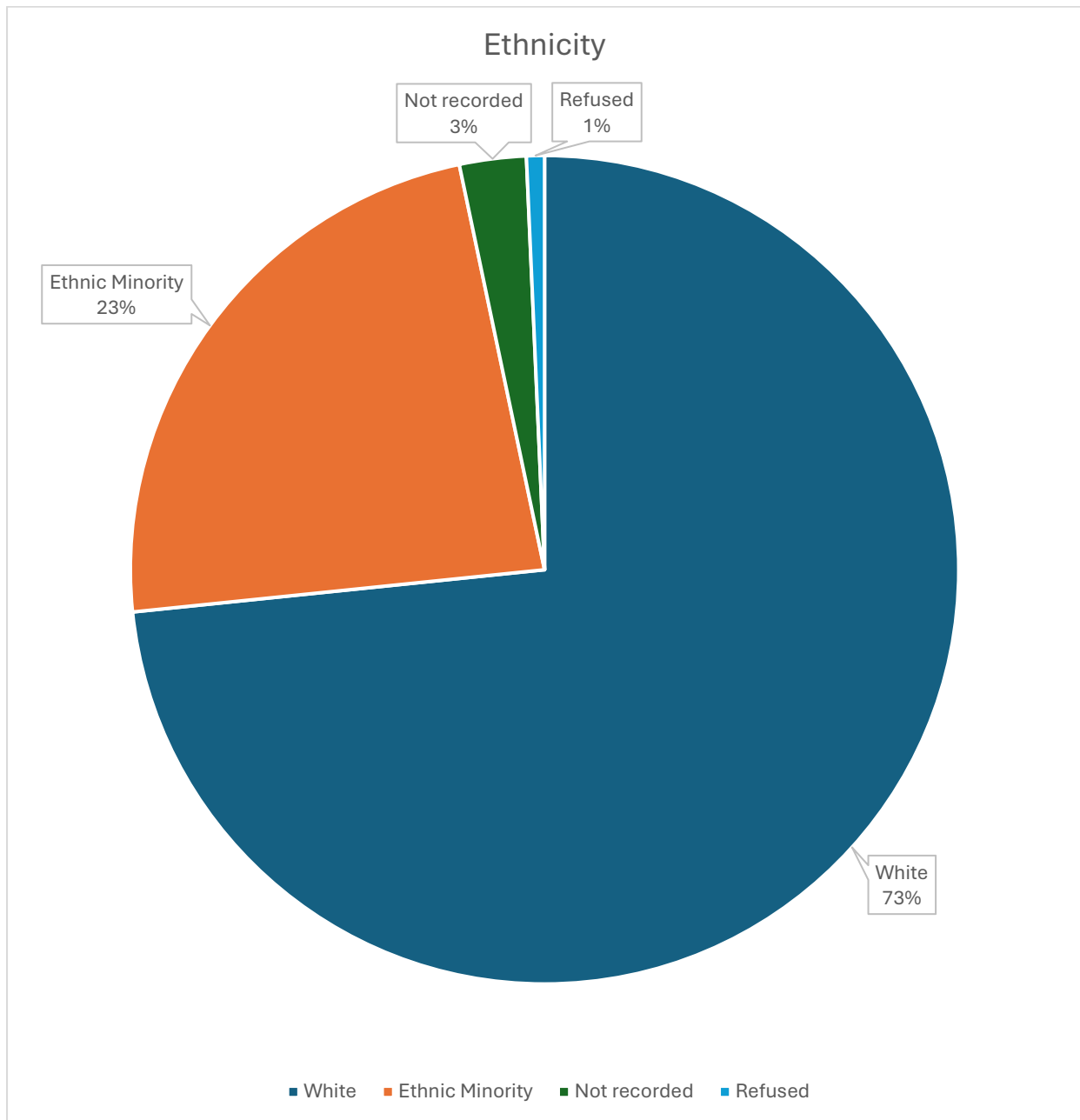
Nearly 50% of our staff are aged 40 – 59, indicating a future retirement risk. Staff feedback also highlights concerns about succession planning and career progression. This presents an opportunity to develop talent pipelines, apprenticeships, and leadership pathways.

Gender Profile



The high proportion of female staff reflects sector norms; however, staff feedback suggests a need for more diversity and flexibility to attract a broader talent pool. This presents an opportunity to promote inclusive recruitment and flexible working models.

Ethnicity Profile



The level of ethnic minority representation is positive, but progression opportunities and inclusion remain key themes in staff engagement. This presents an opportunity to strengthen EDI initiatives and mentoring for underrepresented groups.

Disability Profile

Our data shows that 9.2% of the workforce declared a disability.

What this tells us

Compared to national averages, Medway's workforce profile shows both similarities and unique challenges. Nationally, agency rates in Adult Social Care average around 15%¹, whereas Medway's rate is 18.6%, highlighting a greater reliance on temporary staff. The age profile mirrors national trends, with a significant proportion aged 40 – 59², but Medway's percentage is slightly higher, increasing the urgency for succession planning. Gender imbalance is consistent with national patterns, where women make up around 80% of the workforce², but Medway's figure of 83% suggests an opportunity to attract more men into the profession. Ethnic minority representation in Medway is above the national average of approximately 21%², which is positive, but progression and inclusion remain key priorities. These comparisons show that while Medway shares national challenges, our higher agency reliance and ageing workforce require targeted local solutions.

Diversity and Inclusion of our Workforce

As a local authority we are committed to creating and sustaining a positive and supportive working environment, and an excellent learning experience for our staff.

We aim to create an environment that respects the diversity of all staff, enabling them to achieve their full potential.

The council is committed to ensuring that everyone is:

- Treated with respect and dignity
- Treated fairly
- Encouraged to reach their full potential

The council is committed to providing time and places for staff from similar backgrounds to meet, network and discuss issues that matter to them. Our forums and networks include:

- Employee Wellbeing Champions (mental wellbeing peer support)
- The Disabled Workers and Carers Network
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Questioning (LGBTQI+) Forum
- The Black and Global Majority Support Group (BAGM)
- Gender Equality Forum
- Accessibility Champions Network

We have set strong expectations that no individual will be unjustly discriminated against. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination because of age, disability, gender

¹ Source: Community Care – Use of agency social workers up 25% year on year, 2024

² Source: Skills for Care – The workforce in adult social care today

reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

All staff have a duty to support and uphold the principles of our fair access, diversity and inclusion policy.

Workforce Data Gaps, Insights, and Improvement Requirements

A clear understanding of our workforce data is essential to delivering an effective and future-ready Adult Social Care service. While Medway holds valuable information on workforce demographics, turnover and agency use, there remain gaps that limit our ability to plan proactively, target interventions, and measure progress against our strategic priorities. This section outlines the key areas where workforce intelligence is incomplete or under-developed, explains why these gaps matter for capability, inclusion, wellbeing and transformation, and identifies the actions required to strengthen data quality, insight and decision making.

Skills, Competencies and Capability Mapping Linked Priorities: Priority 1, Priority 6	Gap: Consolidated record of skills, qualifications or digital capability
	Impact: Weakens succession planning; harder to target development; limits predictive analytics
	Actions: Implement Skills Passport; complete skills audit; link data to dashboards and recruitment
Agency Workforce Data (including EDI) Linked Priorities: Priority 1, Priority 3, Priority 4	Gap: EDI, skills, or training data for agency workers; conversion tracking
	Impact: Understanding inclusion; limits quality assurance; hampers stabilisation and talent pipelines
	Actions: Require EDI reporting; ensure access to core learning; track agency-to-perm transitions and reasons for non-conversion
Progression, Recruitment and Leadership Pathways Linked Priorities: Priority 1, Priority 3, Priority 4, Priority 5	Gap: Data on applications and shortlisting for promotions and acting-up roles
	Impact: Monitoring fairness or identifying progression barriers; affects inclusive leadership

	Actions: Capture recruitment funnel data; track acting up and development access
Ethical Practice, Decision Making, and Lived Experience Insight Linked Priorities: Priority 2, Priority 5	Gap: Systematic recording of ethical dilemmas or lived-experience feedback Impact: Harder to evidence improvement in ethical practice; limits cultural change; increases risk to CQC compliance Actions: Add ethics scenarios to supervision; capture learning from Ethics Champions; systematically gather insights from new Engagement and Co-Production activities to feed directly into training, supervision, and policy development
EDI Data Set and Low Disclosure Confidence Linked Priorities: Priority 3, Priority 6	Gap: Missing disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, and gender identity data Impact: Under-reporting masks disparities; reduces accuracy of equality monitoring Actions: Publish EDI data use statement; improve transparency
Wellbeing, Burnout, Workload, and Flexible Working Data Linked Priorities: Priority 4, Priority 5	Gap: No unified data on workload, burnout, or flexible working uptake Impact: Limits early intervention; affects retention and workforce stability Actions: Integrate workload audits; track absence trends; monitor flexible working outcomes
Predictive Analytics for Succession, Demand, and Retirement Risk Linked Priorities: Priority 1, Priority 4, Priority 6	Gap: Forecasting of retirement, demand, hotspots, or capacity gaps Impact: Succession planning reactive; risks to future service capacity Actions: Build predictive analytics for retirement, demand and staffing risk; embed in oversight

Our Workforce Offer and Experience

The Foundations of our Workforce Offer

The challenges outlined in the Local and National Context: rising demand, workforce shortages, financial pressures, and heightened regulatory expectations, shape the way we design our workforce offer. These pressures require us not only to attract and retain skilled professionals, but to create an environment where practice can thrive and evolve. Our workforce offer responds directly to these realities, providing competitive rewards, flexible working, strong career pathways, and a culture of inclusion and wellbeing. By aligning our offer with the context in which we operate, we ensure that Medway remains an employer of choice and that our workforce is equipped to deliver high quality, person-centred care now and in the future.

Like many local authorities, Medway faces significant challenges due to a national shortage of experienced, qualified staff and its proximity to London Boroughs and a large County Council.

The competition for qualified social workers is intense, requiring us to continually review our remuneration package to ensure Medway remains among the top-paying authorities in the South East Region and London. However, while competitive pay is crucial, it is not the only factor in attracting and retaining staff. Creating an environment where practice can thrive and evolve is essential for a sustainable, stable and future-ready workforce. Medway must offer a compelling recruitment and retention package to attract and retain the best staff, making Medway an employer of choice locally and regionally.

To recruit and retain top talent, Medway must provide compelling reasons for people to join and stay with us. Adult Social Care will focus on influencing the supply of practitioners and prioritising the retention, development, and wellbeing of our staff. Our comprehensive workforce offer is designed to manage the positive factors that encourage staff to stay.

Our service achieved an overall rating from the Care Quality Commission of 'Requires Improvement' (score of 59%). The areas rated as 'Good' are –

- Supporting people to lead healthier lives
- Partnerships and communities
- Safe pathways, systems and transitions

The areas 'requiring improvement' are –

- Timeliness of Care Act assessments and reviews
- Occupational therapy assessments
- Safeguarding enquiries
- Support for unpaid carers

- Accessibility of information and services

In 2024/2025 Medway Adult Social Care received an investment of £2.4million to increase staffing and improve service delivery.

Staff engagement is central to our efforts, with a genuine desire to incorporate their input into our improvement journey. Research shows that several factors encourage staff to stay:

- The opportunity to make a difference
- Frequent quality supervision and opportunities for staff development
- Peer support
- Opportunities for career progression
- Organisational support for emotional well-being

These factors form the foundation of Medway's workforce offer, which includes:

- Ability to work flexibly using Medway's Our Ways of Working Policy
- Manageable caseloads and balanced workloads
- Accessible leadership and management
- Frequent quality supervision and support to build confidence and skills in decision-making
- Flexible working styles, with roles assessed as fixed, hybrid, or mobile
- Peer support and teamwork through group supervision, case consultation, and service development events
- A comprehensive learning and development offer
- A Practice Development team offering 1:1 support and coaching for staff
- Leadership training for team leaders and managers
- Competitive rewards and benefits compared to other local authorities
- A comprehensive career progression framework
- A commitment to staff physical and emotional wellbeing

What It Feels Like to Work in Medway

Medway Council is a place where people care, collaborate, and make a meaningful difference. We foster a workplace where staff feel supported, valued, and trusted to innovate as part of our transformation journey. Our strengths-based practice focuses on what people do well, both our staff and the residents we serve, helping everyone grow and succeed.

We work closely together across teams, directorates, and with partners through our "team around the person" approach to ensure truly personalised support. New colleagues often remark on how quickly they feel part of the team and how easy it is to build strong relationships.

Our positive culture prioritises development, wellbeing, and inclusion. As a unitary authority, we're big enough to make a real impact, but small enough to be agile and responsive. Staff benefit from tailored support from our Principal Social Work team, access to weekly wellbeing sessions, high-quality training through our Adults and Students Faculties, and clear Career Progression Frameworks aligned with our Performance, Progression and Pay Policy. Staff value the flexibility to explore different roles and career paths within the council, contributing to job satisfaction and retention.

We are proud of our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, supported by active staff networks that make Medway a place where people feel comfortable being themselves. Staff also enjoy a comprehensive benefits package, including generous annual leave, an occupational pension, and special leave provisions for duties such as school governors, volunteering, and medical needs. Staff have access to exclusive shopping discounts via MedwayMore4You, and confidential 24/7 support through the Care First Employee Assistance Programme. We promote sustainable commuting through green travel schemes like the Tusker car scheme, Arriva bus discounts, and the Cycle to Work scheme. Employees can also take part in climate response volunteering. Sports centre discounts encourage wellbeing, and our Make a Difference Awards celebrate outstanding contributions. Together, these benefits reflect our commitment to valuing and supporting our workforce.

Innovation is part of how we work. We are modernising through technology, using tools such as Magic Notes and AI-enabled solutions, and expanding our use of technology enabled care. Upskilling our workforce is central to this journey.

Insights from our 2025 staff survey and stay interviews reinforce this picture of a workforce that is proud, purposeful, and deeply connected to its values. Staff describe a strong team culture where collaboration and support are central. Many feel proud to work for Medway and are motivated by the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives. Relationships with line managers are a particular strength, with high levels of trust, recognition, and open communication. Staff feel empowered to innovate and improve services, and confident in how they reflect the council's values in their work. Inclusion is a key part of our culture, people feel comfortable being themselves and quickly develop a strong sense of belonging.

Why Medway?

Big enough to make an impact, small enough to feel connected

As a unitary authority, you can collaborate across services and influence change without navigating complex layers of bureaucracy.

Clear opportunities for growth

Our structured development pathways and accessible leadership create an environment where your career can thrive.

A place that welcomes new ideas

We embrace innovation, digital solutions, and co-production. Your voice genuinely shapes how we deliver services.

Strong, joined-up partnerships

Working within an integrated system alongside health, voluntary and community partners, means you can make a meaningful difference through holistic support.

An inclusive and supportive culture

Flexible working, active staff networks, and a strong commitment to wellbeing ensures you feel valued and supported.

What Matters Most to our Staff

The 2025 staff survey and stay interviews highlight that Medway Council is a place where people feel proud to work, supported by strong teams, and motivated by a shared sense of purpose. Staff told us they want to feel informed about the council's direction and involved in shaping the decisions that affect their work. They appreciate open, two-way communication and leadership that is visible, approachable and engaged. They are interested in more interactive and tailored communication that reflects their experiences and needs.

Recognition is a key motivator. Staff value being acknowledged for their contributions, whether through verbal praise or development opportunities. While many staff feel supported to grow, there is a desire for clearer career pathways and more visible support for progression.

A strong sense of belonging and team spirit also matters. Staff describe Medway as a friendly, inclusive, and close-knit workplace where colleagues support one another and where people feel comfortable being themselves. Positive relationships with line managers are a particular strength, with high levels of trust, engagement, and recognition.

Work-life balance and flexibility are important to staff, as are the benefits that support financial security and wellbeing. While many value the council's flexible working policies, there is a clear call for more visible and accessible wellbeing and mental health support, especially considering workload pressures.

Together, this feedback paints a clear picture: our people value connection, recognition, growth, and a workplace culture that supports them to thrive and make a difference.

DRAFT

Our Vision, Values and Future Workforce

Our Vision

To develop, adapt, and innovate to sustain and continually evolve a confident, skilled, inclusive, and future-ready Adult Social Care workforce that reflects Medway's diversity and values. This includes everyone across the Division, whether in frontline practice, in-house provision, commissioning, business support, or systems. Our workforce will drive transformation, embrace innovation and digital solutions, and ensure stability through succession planning and retention. Together we will champion human rights, diversity, and excellence in all roles, enabling high quality services that enable people in Medway to live autonomous, fulfilling lives within their communities.

In practice, this vision means that our workforce:

- Demonstrates confidence through timely, ethical and proportionate decision making
- Shows strong, evolving professional, digital and cultural competencies
- Reflects Medway's diversity and models inclusive, respectful behaviours
- Is future-ready, digitally confident, adaptable and supported through succession planning
- Drives transformation by engaging positively with change and improvement
- Champions human rights and delivers high quality, person-centred support

Our Values and Behaviours



Workforce Maturity Model

The Workforce Maturity Model below illustrates how our workforce will progress as we embed this vision in practice. It provides a clear picture of what “good” looks like, helping us to understand where we are now, where we aim to be, and how we will measure our journey toward a future-ready, high performing Adult Social Care workforce.

Domain	Emerging	Developing	Established	Thriving (Future Ready)
Confidence	Staff feel uncertain with complex decisions; inconsistent escalation.	Improving decision making; supervision supports reflection.	Consistent, timely decisions; psychological safety emerging.	High confidence; proactive decision making; strong professional curiosity.
Skills and Capability	Gaps in core training; digital confidence low; heavy agency reliance.	Core skills improving; learning offer used more consistently.	Skills passport adoption; strong internal capability.	Highly skilled; multi-disciplinary; digitally confident; low agency use.
Inclusion and Representation	Underrepresentation in senior roles; low disclosure rates.	Training delivered; improved data confidence.	More equitable progression; diverse panels.	Workforce reflects Medway at all levels; strong cultural competence.
Digital and Data Readiness	Digital skills variable; limited dashboard use.	Mandatory digital training embedded.	Data literacy improving; dashboards used regularly.	Digital fluency; predictive analytics and technology enabled care embedded in practice.
Transformation Readiness	Change seen as disruptive; engagement low.	Improved communication; early engagement in redesign.	Change readiness workshops delivered; staff contributing to improvement.	Workforce drives innovation; continuous improvement culture.

Ethical and Human Rights Practice	Ethical dilemmas escalate inconsistently; limited rights-based framing.	Ethics scenarios used in supervision; increasing awareness.	Ethics Champions active; rights-based language common.	Ethical practice embedded; co-production influences all major decisions.
Leadership and Culture	Leadership visibility inconsistent.	Leadership development under way.	Coaching culture emerging; 360 feedback in use.	Visible, inclusive, values-driven leadership with strong trust and alignment.
Sustainability and Succession	High reliance on agency; ageing workforce risk unmanaged.	Talent mapping emerging.	Succession plans in priority areas.	Stable workforce; strong pipelines; future-proofed skills and capacity.

Our Workforce Priorities and Actions

These priorities reflect our scope of supporting the internal Adult Social Care workforce across all roles, and they align with wider strategies by embedding digital readiness, inclusion, and continuous improvement. Each priority sets out what we're trying to achieve, what it means for our workforce, what data tells us, and the actions we will take, including Year One focus and measures of success.

The six workforce priorities are deliberately sequenced. Early delivery focuses on stabilisation, core capability and decision quality, followed by embedding inclusive leadership, sustainable pipelines and data-driven planning. This sequencing ensures delivery capacity is protected and improvement is sustained.

Priority 1: Workforce Capability and Confidence

This priority aligns with the Adult Social Care Strategy's ambition to be bold and innovative, the CQC Improvement Plan's focus on quality and timeliness, and the Transformation and Improvement Programme's emphasis on digital readiness.

Our aim is to establish a confident, skilled, and future-ready workforce capable of delivering complex care and driving transformation, so that people in Medway experience timely, person-centred support. For our workforce, this means access to comprehensive learning opportunities, digital skills development, and clear career pathways. Workforce data highlights high agency reliance and an ageing profile, reinforcing the need for succession planning and capability building.

Actions

- Embed a comprehensive learning and development offer open to the whole Division, with protected time for training attendance (enhanced training, reflective supervision, peer learning, CPD)
- Evaluate apprenticeship and placement programmes to expand capacity
- Open access to core learning to agency staff to stabilise practice quality
- Develop digital skills and data literacy to use technology enabled care, AI-based tools, and data dashboards for improved decision making
- Introduce a skills passport that tracks digital competencies and cultural competence alongside professional skills
- Provide change readiness workshops to support transformation and improvement
- Establish Digital Champions in every team to support technology adoption
- Emphasise career development pathways; link learning opportunities to recognition; embed succession planning and career pathways to address an ageing workforce

- Develop learning modules for emerging practice areas, and role-specific capability modules where these do not already exist

Measures of Success

- % of staff reporting confidence with digital tools
- % of staff with completed skills passport
- Agency workforce reduced from 18.6% (2025 baseline) to ≤15% by 2027, and ≤12% by 2028
- Year-on-year increase in internal progression
- Positive feedback on learning and recognition
- Timeliness of Care Act assessments/reviews

Priority 2: Ethical Practice and Human Rights

This priority supports the Adult Social Care Strategy's commitment to dignity and respect and meets CQC expectations for safeguarding and person-centred care. It also directly supports better quality and consistency of decision making and improved resident experiences, by ensuring decisions are fair, transparent, proportionate, and clearly communicated.

Our aim is to embed ethical decision making and human rights in all aspects of our work so that decisions and services are co-produced, fair and proportionate. Our approach will reflect Medway's values of fairness and respect, ensuring ethical practice is embedded in every interaction. For our workforce, this means confidence in applying ethical frameworks and co-production principles. Data and staff feedback indicate a need for stronger involvement in decision making, and support for handling complex ethical dilemmas, while CQC actions require greater consistency in thresholds, timeliness and communication.

Actions

- Align training and supervision with human rights principles and co-production to improve the quality, fairness and defensibility of decision making
- Embed ethical frameworks that reflect CQC expectations for safe, person-centred care and support consistent thresholds and proportional decision making
- Establish communities of practice for reflective dialogue and shared learning
- Include ethical dilemmas and rights-based scenarios in training and supervision with explicit consideration of cultural, equality and lived experience perspectives
- Co-produce policy reviews with people who draw on care and support to ensure policies reflect real-world experiences and reduce avoidable challenge or dissatisfaction

- Integrate lived experience into workforce development and decision making to ensure our work is grounded in real-world perspectives and values
- Introduce Ethics Champions across teams to promote and model ethical practice and act as early points of advice to prevent unnecessary escalation
- Use Diversity Impact Assessments in workforce planning and service design, and consider ethics/human rights explicitly in planning and design to identify and mitigate potential unintended impacts that could lead to complaints or inequality
- Involve staff in ethical policy design
- Provide support for managers handling ethical dilemmas (including mental health support) to support timely, confident, and proportionate decision making

Measures of Success

- Staff confidence in handling ethical dilemmas
- % of teams with active Ethics Champions
- % of policies co-produced
- Reduction in complaints and escalations relating to fairness, communication or involvement
- Improved consistency in decision making, evidenced through repeat challenges or rework

Priority 3: Inclusion, Diversity and Cultural Competence

This priority aligns with the Adult Social Care Strategy's fairness and prevention goals, and the CQC Improvement Plan's focus on representation.

Inclusive and culturally competent practice is critical to making good decisions, building trust with residents and communities, and reducing complaints arising from perceived bias, misunderstanding, or exclusion.

Our aim is to create an inclusive workforce that reflects Medway's diversity, with equitable recruitment, development, and progression across all roles. A diverse and inclusive workforce brings a wider range of perspectives, improving the quality of professional judgement and ensuring services respond effectively to the needs of Medway's communities. For our workforce, this means cultural competence and equal access to progression opportunities. Workforce data shows positive ethnic minority representation but highlights progression gaps and low confidence in sharing equality data.

Actions

- Deliver cultural competence training for all staff
- Introduce inclusive leadership development
- Improve EDI data transparency and build trust in how data is used and protected

- Launch mentoring programmes for underrepresented groups
- Support managers to lead inclusive conversations and respond confidently to concerns helping issues to be addressed informally and earlier
- Use Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) data to inform improvement actions and representation that aligns with Medway's demographics
- Co-produce workforce initiatives with diverse communities
- Identify and address disparities in recruitment, retention, and progression data

Measures of Success

- Improvement in staff perception of inclusion
- Progression rates for underrepresented groups
- Confidence in sharing EDI data

Priority 4: Recruitment, Retention and Wellbeing

This priority supports the Adult Social Care Strategy and Transformation and Improvement Programme goals for workforce stability and wellbeing.

Our aim is to attract and retain talented professionals while supporting their wellbeing, positioning Medway as an employer of choice. This includes strengthening our employer brand, improving our market-facing presence, and developing targeted recruitment approaches that reach both domestic and global talent pools. For our workforce, this means flexible working, wellbeing support, and clear career pathways. Workforce data highlights high agency reliance and staff feedback on workload and wellbeing concerns.

Actions

- Develop and promote a clear employer brand for Adult Social Care, highlighting Medway's values, benefits, career pathways, and support offer
- Implement recruitment strategies targeting future skills, including digital skills and strengths-based practice
- Build service-specific recruitment pipelines, including links with universities, colleges, apprenticeship providers, and international recruitment agencies
- Strengthen our digital presence, including refreshed content on our website, improved job adverts, and increased use of social media campaigns
- Launch targeted marketing campaigns, including international recruitment, return-to-practice routes, and campaigns focused on hard-to-fill roles
- Target recruitment to underrepresented groups and address gender imbalance through inclusive messaging and community outreach
- Strengthen retention strategies to reduce agency reliance and improve workforce stability
- Enhance visibility of wellbeing initiatives, including mental health support, reflective practice, and occupational health pathways

- Address workload/time pressures (time management support, workload audits, wellbeing conversations)
- Include recognition mechanisms to support retention
- Plan succession based on age profile; identify priority areas with more than 60% staff over 60
- Continue to embed Career Progression Frameworks to support long-term retention
- Use outcomes from exit interviews, stay interviews, and staff surveys to shape retention actions
- Refresh induction processes to ensure a positive and equitable experience across Adult Social Care

Measures of Success

- Reduction in agency rate
- Conversion rate of agency to permanent staff
- Maintain $\geq 80\%$ 12-month retention for permanent staff by 2027
- Staff satisfaction with wellbeing and workload
- Staff satisfaction with effectiveness of induction
- Uptake and engagement with employer brand and digital recruitment channels
- Diversity of applicants and hires
- Number of succession plans in priority areas

Priority 5: Leadership and Culture

This priority aligns with Medway's values, the Adult Social Care Strategy's ambition to foster innovation, and the Transformation and Improvement Programme's governance objectives.

Our aim is to embed ethical, inclusive, and visionary leadership that drives transformation. For our workforce, this means visible, responsive leadership and a culture of continuous improvement. Staff feedback highlights the need for stronger leadership visibility and improved communication. CQC actions require consistent standards, oversight and timely decisions, so leadership capability and behaviours must be explicit and measurable.

Actions

- Deliver leadership development focused on managing transformation and leading change, equipping leaders to champion all change, including cultural change, and model adaptability
- Introduce inclusive leadership training
- Embed coaching and mentoring for managers
- Implement 360-degree feedback for leaders

- Develop succession planning frameworks for leadership sustainability
- Increase senior leadership visibility and responsiveness
- Use mixed communication formats (including interactive formats) and improve feedback loops, embed consistent communication across Adult Social Care
- Introduce management and leadership-specific induction processes, particularly to support those transitioning into leadership
- Undertake psychological safety audits to ensure staff feel heard and valued

Measures of Success

- Staff confidence in leadership
- Participation in leadership programmes
- Attendance/engagement with visibility activities
- % feedback actions closed

Priority 6: Data, Intelligence and Impact

This priority supports the Adult Social Care Strategy's commitment to innovation and the Transformation and Improvement Programme's focus on technology and data.

Our aim is to ensure workforce decisions are informed by robust data and analytics. For our workforce, this means confidence in using data to improve services and plan needs. Workforce intelligence shows the need for predictive analytics and data literacy to support succession planning and improvement. Local requirements include retirement-risk forecasting, demand/wait monitoring, EDI metrics, and linking workforce intelligence to improvement actions.

Actions

- Develop workforce dashboards and predictive analytics to support workforce planning and service improvement
- Upskill managers and staff in data literacy and digital confidence, ensuring they can interpret insights and use technology effectively
- Embed training on cybersecurity and ethical use of digital tools
- Track recruitment KPIs, advertisement success, and EDI metrics
- Use analytics to forecast retirement trends and inform succession planning
- Explore predictive analytics to forecast workforce needs and risks

Measures of Success

- % of managers/staff trained in data literacy
- Frequency of dashboard use in decision making
- Accuracy of workforce forecasts vs actuals
- Reduction in waits/backlogs
- Movement in EDI indicators (particularly those related to recruitment and progression)

Delivery, Measuring Impact and Assurance

Measuring Effectiveness and Impact

It is essential that measures demonstrate not only activity delivery but the difference it makes for residents and staff. We will track the following, applying the “so what” test to every indicator: how does movement in this metric translate into better experiences and outcomes for residents and a better day-to-day experience for staff?

Category	Definition	Data Source	So What?
People Outcomes			
Timeliness and flow across Care Act pathways	Median days from contact to assessment completion	Case management system	Faster, reliable assessments mean people get support sooner Risks reduce earlier Carers experience less stress
	Proportion of assessments and reviews completed withing agreed timeliness standards	Monthly dashboard reviews	
	Backlog volumes	Quality assurance audits	
	Feedback from individuals, carers, and families	Engagement feedback	
Safeguarding Section 42 enquiries	Proportion triaged within agreed timescales	Safeguarding data sets	Timely, effective enquiries protect people’s rights and safety and build public confidence
	Proportion concluded with outcomes achieved	Quality assurance audits	
	Repeat safeguarding concerns		
	Timeliness of decision making		

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)	Waiting times from referral to authorisation Open caseload/backlog volumes Proportion of urgent authorisations completed within target timeframe	DoLS data sets Monthly dashboard reviews	Reduced waits uphold people's liberty and ensure lawful practice
Accessible Information Standards (AIS) and communication needs	Percentage of outbound communications meeting recorded needs Readability score for standard letters/forms	Communication reviews Readability score reviews	Information people can use enables choice, control and fair access
Reablement and independence	Proportion of people who do not require ongoing long-term support 90 days post-reablement Community equipment outcomes	Reablement data sets OT data sets	Effective reablement reduces dependence and supports people to live well at home
Complaints and escalations	Number and proportion of complaints, MP enquiries or formal escalations where themes include perceived unfairness, discrimination, poor communication, or lack of involvement Number of repeat complaints Proportion of concerns or issues resolved informally by managers without progressing to formal complaint or escalation	Complaints data MP enquiry logs Escalation tracking	EDI and ethical practice improvements reduce avoidable dissatisfaction and escalation Resident experience decision making as fair, transparent and respectful

Workforce Outcomes			
Agency reliance and vacancies	Percentage FTE agency Vacancy rate Cost of agency spend Time in post for agency vs permanent	HR workforce data	Lower agency dependence improves stability, continuity, and value for money
Agency to permanent conversion	Percentage of agency staff converting to permanent employment	HR workforce data	Conversion reduces cost, improves continuity, stabilises teams and accelerates workforce resilience
Retention and turnover	12 and 24-month retention rates New starter survival rates Exit/stay interview themes	HR workforce data Exit/stay interview data	Improve retention sustains improvement and reduces workload churn
Time to hire and onboarding quality	Days from vacancy approval to start date Offer acceptance rate Induction completion and quality ratings Candidate experience feedback	HR recruitment data Candidate/new starter surveys	Faster, high-quality hiring fills critical gaps sooner and improves early performance
Caseloads and workload manageability	Median caseloads by role Percentage of staff within caseload ceiling Supervision frequency and quality	Case system and supervision records	Manageable workloads protect quality, wellbeing, and decision making

Wellbeing and absence	Sickness absence rates (including stress-related) Participation in wellbeing sessions Burnout rates via pulse surveys Workload pressure indicators (e.g. overtime hours, supervision delays) Psychological safety and stress indicators Trends in wellbeing risks before sickness absence	HR workforce data (including absence trends) Wellbeing session attendance Pulse surveys Supervision audits	Better wellbeing reduces sickness and improves service reliability Enables early intervention, preventing burnout, reducing sickness, and protecting workforce stability and quality of practice
Career progression and development	Internal progression rates Progression through Career Progression Frameworks Completion of skills passport Mentoring participation Apprenticeship completions	HR learning and development data Career Progression Framework data	Visible growth pathways support retention and capability
Confidence and professional judgement	Staff confidence applying legislation, making proportionate decisions, and using professional judgement appropriately	Staff survey Pulse checks Supervision records	Higher confidence improves timeliness, reduces escalation, and strengthens decision quality

Quality assurance returns	Number and proportion of assessments/reviews returned for correction due to quality issues	QA audit data Case management system	Reduced rework improves timeliness, consistency, and resident experience
Succession planning coverage (high risk roles)	Proportion of high risk teams and roles with active succession plans	Workforce planning data	Ensures continuity, stability, and reduces impact of workforce loss
Manager confidence to lead change and support staff well	Manager confidence in leading transformation, supporting staff through change, and applying compassionate people management practices	Manager surveys Pulse checks 360° feedback Supervision audits	Strong, confident leadership increases staff stability, supports wellbeing, and accelerates successful sustained change
Access to high quality development and support	Percentage of staff accessing required and optional development pathways Quality ratings of training and coaching Staff perception of access to high quality learning	Learning and development data sets Training evaluations Pulse surveys	Ensures staff have the skills, confidence, and support they need to delivery high quality, consistent practice
Flexible working access and uptake	Proportion of staff with agreed flexible working arrangements Time to process flexible working requests Staff perception of flexibility	HR workforce data sets Flexible working request logs Pulse surveys	Flexible working improves retention, reduces stress, and supports a healthier, more sustainable workforce

Equity Outcomes (Fairness and Representation)			
Appointment parity	Shortlist-to-offer ratio by protected characteristic Diversity of applicants, shortlists and hires Gender balance by role	HR recruitment data	Fair access to jobs builds a workforce that reflects Medway and brings varied skills
Disciplinary and grievance parity	Disparity ration for formal cases by protected characteristic Outcomes parity Time to resolution	HR employee relations data	Equitable processes strengthen trust, psychological safety, and retention
Progression and representation	Representation at each Range Progression rates by protected characteristic Gender and ethnicity pay gap indicators	HR workforce data	Inclusive progression ensures talent is recognised and leadership reflects our communities
Senior level representation (alignment with Medway's demographics)	Diversity of leaders relative to local population	HR workforce data	Diverse leadership strengthens decision quality, trust, and representation

Digital and Data Outcomes			
Digital confidence and capability	Percentage staff completing digital skills passport Completion of cyber security/ethical use training Staff reported confidence using digital tools, dashboards, and technology enabled care	HR learning and development data Staff survey	Confident use of technology improves practice quality and efficiency
Tool adoption and useful analytics	Monthly active users of existing and new tools (including Magic Notes, Virtual House, etc.) Frequency of data informed decisions recorded in meeting minutes Technology Enabled Care utilisation	System governance logs Meeting minutes Case data	When data is used often and well, waits fall and outcomes improve
Forecast accuracy and planning	Accuracy of predicted retirements/leavers vs actuals Forecast vs actuals of demand and capacity Number of succession plans in place for high-risk teams	HR workforce data Adult Social Care workload data	Better forecasts allow proactive hiring and training to avoid service disruption
Adoption speed for new digital/practice tools	Time between tool rollout and consistent team adoption Number of active users	System logs Project implementation reports	Faster adoption increases efficiency and reduces backlogs

Data informed actions	Proportion of workforce or service improvement decisions explicitly referencing dashboard or analytics insight	Meeting minutes Transformation and Improvement Programme papers	Demonstrates that data capability leads to action, not just reporting, improving grip on performance and risk
Leadership and Culture Outcomes			
Leadership visibility and engagement	Number of visibility events Attendance at events Engagement score for communications Percentage of feedback actions closed	Communications analytics and action logs Feedback from staff reference group	Visible, responsive leadership builds trust and accelerates improvement
Staff confidence in leadership and culture	Index from staff survey on confidence, inclusion, and psychological safety Supervision quality	Staff survey Social Care health check Pulse checks Feedback from staff reference group Supervision Quality Assurance audits	Strong culture enables better decisions and better resident outcomes
Psychological safety	Staff perception of safety to speak up, challenge, and admit mistakes	Staff survey Health check Pulse surveys	Higher psychological safety improves innovation, learning, and retention

Ethical practice and rights-based decision making	Staff confidence applying ethical frameworks and human rights principles in complex decisions	Pulse surveys Supervision audits	Embeds safe, fair, person-centred decisions across Adult Social Care
Ethics Champions activity	Number of active Ethics Champions Participation in ethics-related forums	Ethics Champions network logs	Ensures ethical practice is modelled, visible, and embedded
Change readiness and improvement participation	Proportion of staff completing change-readiness activities Proportion of staff involved in improvement activities	Transformation Programme records	Supports smoother change, and faster adoption of new ways of working
Staff-led improvement proposals	Number of workforce-generated improvement ideas submitted and adopted	Transformation records Governance papers	Staff-driven improvement increases ownership and sustainability
Leadership development and 360° feedback completion	Percentage of managers completing leadership development programmes 360° feedback cycles	Learning and development data sets	Strengthens leadership capability, culture, and team confidence
Policy and practice co-production	Proportion of key workforce and practice policies co-produced with people who draw on care and support	Policy governance logs Co-production activity records	Co-produced policies are more accessible, realistic and trusted, reducing challenge, misunderstanding and dissatisfaction with decisions

Headline Key Performance Indicators

The following headline indicators provide a clear, balanced view of the areas that matter most to residents, staff and senior leaders. They focus on statutory assurance, workforce stability, the quality and timeliness of support, and the cultural and digital capabilities needed to sustain improvement. Together, they offer a simple, high-value picture of performance, risk, and impact, allowing us to track progress, identify pressure points early, and ensure that Adult Social Care continues to deliver safe, effective, and person-centred practice.

Key Performance Indicator		What Success Looks Like
Timeliness of Assessments	Median days waiting between contact and assessment Median days from contact to assessment completion Number of people waiting for an assessment	≥90% of assessments completed within Medway's published local standard Median days waiting reduced year on year
Safeguarding Timeliness	Percentage of Section 42 enquiries triaged within required timescales	≥95% triaged within required timescales
Reablement Impact	Percentage of people not requiring long-term support 90 days post-reablement	≥80% not requiring long term support at 90 days
Agency Reliance	Percentage of workforce FTE delivered through agency	≤15% by 2027, ≤12% by 2028
Vacancy and Retention Health	12-month retention rate for permanent staff	≥80% 12-month retention
Wellbeing and Burnout Risk	Sickness absence rate (including stress-related)	At or below Local Authority average (≤4%) with stress-related absence falling year-on-year
Caseload Manageability	Percentage of practitioners within caseload ceiling	≥85% of staff operating within agreed caseload thresholds
Manager Confidence to Lead Change	Manager confidence index (survey/pulse score)	Internal confidence index ≥80% positive and sustained
Access to Development	Percentage of staff completing required development pathways/skills passport	≥90% of staff have completed required role-relevant development pathways

		≥75% of staff have accessed at least one optional or developmental learning opportunity within the year
Flexible Working Access	Percentage of flexible working requests responded to within agreed timescales Staff confidence that flexible working is accessible and fair	≥90% of flexible working requests responded to within agreed timescales Staff survey responses show increasing confidence that flexible working is accessible and fair
Digital Confidence and Adoption	Percentage of staff confident using digital tools and dashboards	≥85% of staff confident using core digital tools
Staff Confidence in Leadership and Culture	Leadership and culture index (survey/pulse score)	Staff survey index ≥80% with improving trust and visibility

Governance and Accountability

Oversight of the implementation of the workforce strategy will be through the Adult Social Care Leadership Team, Children and Adults Directorate Management Team and the Adult Social Care Improvement Programme Board.

A monthly Adults Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Board meeting will review progress against key priorities. This meeting is chaired by the Director of People & Deputy Chief Executive (Statutory DASS) and attended by the Assistant Director of Adult Social Care, Adult Social Care Heads of Service, Principal Social Worker, Principal Occupational Therapist, Operations Managers, Service Improvement Programme Leads, HR Business Partner, Finance Business Partner, and Performance Business Partner.

Programme Governance, Risk Management and Escalation

Delivery of the workforce strategy will be managed through the Adult Social Care Transformation and Improvement Programme. Each priority will have a named senior owner responsible for delivery, monitoring of dependencies, and risk management.

Delivery capacity will be actively managed. Each priority and major action will be assessed for delivery effort, leadership time, and team capacity to ensure improvement activity does not undermine business as usual service delivery. Where actions exceed available capacity, reprioritisation or phased delivery will be agreed through programme governance.

Risks to delivery will be recorded, monitored and reviewed through both project-level and programme-level governance mechanisms. Where risks cannot be mitigated at project level, they will be escalated to the Adult Social Care Improvement Programme Board for review, decision making and support.

If risks or issues present a significant threat to delivery, or have cross-cutting implications for quality, performance or statutory compliance, they will be further escalated to the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Board for scrutiny and direction. This ensures risks are managed at the appropriate level and that mitigations are robust, timely and aligned with organisational priorities.

Managing Slippage and Missed Milestones

Progress against milestones will be tracked through routine programme monitoring. Key delivery risks include workforce capacity constraints, competing transformation demands, recruitment lead-in times, digital readiness, and reliance on external markets. If milestones are missed or delivery is at risk of delay:

- The issue will be reviewed by the relevant Senior Responsible Owner for the project area who will identify causes, impact, and proposed mitigations.

- Revised delivery plans or recovery actions will be developed and reported through programme governance.
- The Improvement Programme Board will assess whether additional resource, reprioritisation, or changes to scope are required to regain trajectory.
- Where significant slippage impacts statutory responsibilities, quality outcomes, or organisational risk, the matter will be escalated to the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Board for scrutiny and decision making.

Ongoing scrutiny from both the Improvement Programme Board and the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Board will ensure slippage is addressed through established governance routes and that progress is restored as swiftly as possible.

Review Cycle

This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure progress against priorities, reflect changes in national or local context, and incorporate learning from the programme's governance processes.

Road Map to 2028

Delivery		
Year 1 <i>Building the Foundations</i>	Year 2 <i>Scaling and Embedding</i>	Year 3 <i>Growth and Maturity</i>
Purpose: Establish core capability, trust, and the enabling infrastructure	Purpose: Embed successful approaches and reduce inconsistency across services	Purpose: Optimise performance, predict risk, and sustain workforce resilience
Key themes: • Baseline capability and confidence • Pilot and test new approaches • Create shared language, tools, and expectations • Build trust in EDI, data and leadership	Key themes: • Scale what works • Embed learning into practice • Strengthen consistency across teams • Shift accountability to managers and leaders	Key themes: • Formalise ownership • Embed actions and outcomes into governance and performance frameworks • Validate impact • Ensure sustainability beyond the life of this strategy
Delivery focus across priorities:		
Workforce Capability and Confidence		
• Pilot Digital Champions network • Roll out mandatory digital skills training • Launch skills passport across Adult Social Care • Initiate succession planning and early talent pipelines • Begin change readiness workshops to build understanding of change and resilience	• Advance data literacy for managers and senior officers • Embed skills passport into supervision, appraisal, and career pathways • Expand apprenticeships and placements • Embed succession planning linked to workforce data • Equip managers to lead teams through change using consistent tools and approaches	• Formalise the learning and development offer as business as usual with clear ownership and funding • Embed skills passport data into workforce planning, talent management, and succession decisions • Review and refresh role and capability frameworks in line with evolving service models

		• Embed change readiness into leadership expectations, workforce planning, and improvement governance
Ethical Practice and Human Rights		
• Launch Ethics Champions network • Add ethics and human rights scenarios into supervision • Co-produce priority policy reviews with staff and people with lived experience	• Expand Ethics Champions network and communities of practice • Embed ethical frameworks into decision making tools and policy templates • Establish regular reflective ethical forums for managers	• Embed ethical governance and escalation routes for complex decision making • Use learning from ethical forums to inform policy updates and service improvement • Review effectiveness of Ethics Champions and transition into a sustainable, reflective practice model
Inclusion, Diversity and Cultural Competence		
• Roll out cultural competence training • Launch mentoring pilot for underrepresented groups • Publish EDI data use statement, and build staff confidence through briefings	• Embed inclusive leadership development • Expand mentoring programmes • Use WRES and local EDI data to drive targeted improvement actions • Begin closing progression and recruitment gaps	• Embed EDI measures into leadership performance expectations and workforce planning • Review and refresh mentoring and sponsorship models to ensure sustained impact • Use progression and representation data to set longer-term improvement priorities
Recruitment, Retention and Wellbeing		
• Launch targeted, multi-channel recruitment campaigns • Establish service specific recruitment pipelines	• Strengthen retention strategies informed by stay and exit interviews • Reduce agency reliance through conversion	• Formalise long-term recruitment and pipeline agreements through working with local education institutions, providers and partners

• Refresh induction for consistency and equity • Promote wellbeing offer and deliver manager mental health training • Conduct workload audits and act on findings	• Target recruitment to address skills gaps and ageing workforce profile	• Embed retention and wellbeing indicators into service performance reviews • Test workforce resilience against future demand, retirement risk, and delivery pressures
Leadership and Culture		
• Launch leadership development programme • Pilot 360-degree feedback • Publish leadership visibility plan • Establish feedback loop processes	• Embed coaching culture for managers • Implement leadership succession planning • Increase leadership visibility through structured engagement • Regularly review and respond to feedback loop themes	• Embed leadership behaviours and expectations into appraisal and promotion processes • Review leadership pipeline health and readiness annually • Use staff engagement and psychological safety data to drive continuous improvement actions
Data, Intelligence and Impact		
• Launch Workforce Dashboard v1 • Deliver data literacy training (cohort 1) • Define predictive models for succession and capacity risk	• Release Workforce Dashboard v2 with enhanced insights • Embed dashboard use in leadership and service planning • Begin predictive analytics for retirement risk, capacity, and demand • Track recruitment, EDI, and retention KPIs consistently	• Embed workforce intelligence into formal planning, reporting, and decision making cycles • Validate and refine predictive models using actual outcomes • Produce an annual workforce impact report linking workforce actions to service quality and performance
Impact		
End of Year 3 Outcomes		
Workforce Capability and Confidence		
• Fully embedded, sustained learning programme • Skills passport used as a workforce planning and mobility tool		

• Leadership and specialist pathways aligned to future service models • Measurable internal progression and leadership readiness • Workforce demonstrates confidence and resilience in responding to change
Ethical Practice and Human Rights
• Ethical practice embedded as standard across services • Strong staff confidence in handling complex dilemmas • Co-production embedded as “how we work”
Inclusion, Diversity and Cultural Competence
• Representative leadership and progression outcomes • High confidence in EDI data and transparency • Cultural competence embedded across practice, leadership and policy
Recruitment, Retention and Wellbeing
• Sustained reduction in agency reliance • Strong employer brand with measurable market recognition • Stable workforce with high retention and wellbeing indicators • Succession plans in place for all critical risk areas
Leadership and Culture
• Mature, visible, and values-led leadership culture • Strong psychological safety and staff engagement • Continuous improvement embedded across teams
Data, Intelligence and Impact
• Predictive workforce intelligence routinely informs decision making • Near-accurate forecasting of risk, capacity, and demand • Clear links between workforce actions, service quality, and outcomes • Evidence of reduced waits, improved timeliness, and better experience