

Principal Social Worker For Adults



Delivering for you

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



ABSTRACT

The key focus of this year could be summarised as 'Making a Difference'. How do we know the work that we do makes a positive difference to someone's life? And how do we create the right conditions for our teams so that they are empowered to be creative, trauma informed and strengths-based in their interactions with people? This annual report highlights the role of the Principal Social Worker (PSW) in promoting excellence in social work and broader adult social care at South Gloucestershire Council.

Hannah Scaife
PSW For Adults

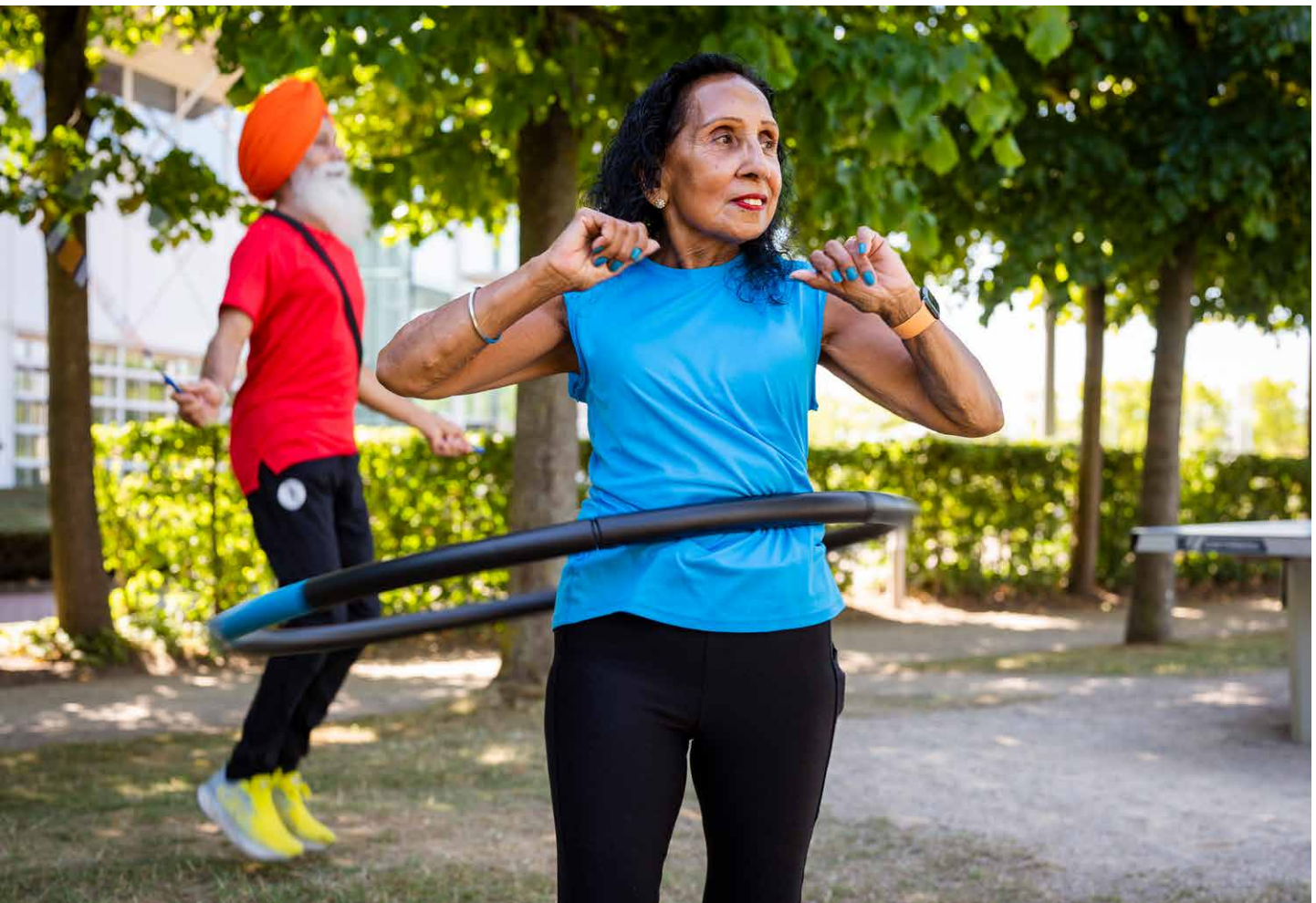
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Welcome to the annual Principal Social Worker (PSW) for Adults report for South Gloucestershire Council's Department for People. This report highlights the role of the PSW in promoting excellence in social work and the achievements of the PSW for March 2023 - April 2024.
- 1.2 The PSW annual report is an opportunity to reflect on and look back over the last 12 months, celebrate achievements, identify learning and look to the future.

As PSW, I have been privileged to work in partnership with people with lived expertise, colleagues across social care and learning and development, as well as in close collaboration with the regional and national PSW Network. I continue to be impressed by the compassion, creativity, and responsiveness of our teams – who continue to rise to the challenges of these difficult times. I want to start by thanking everyone.



2. Background

- 2.1 Principal Social Workers take a professional leadership role across the organisation and act as a bridge for better communication and understanding between Senior Management and Social Workers.
- 2.2 The Care and Support Statutory Guidance (update May 2016) provided further clarification about the Principal Social Worker role for adults. The Guidance states that the Principal Social Worker should be visible across the organisation, from Elected Members and Senior Management, through to Social Workers and people who draw on care and support and their carers. Principal Social Workers should also have a broad knowledge base on safeguarding and 'Making Safeguarding Personal'. It also states that local authorities should make arrangements to have a qualified and registered social work professional practice lead in place to:
- Lead and oversee excellent social work practice
 - Support and develop arrangements for excellent practice
 - Lead the development of excellent Social Workers
 - Support effective social work supervision and decision making
 - Oversee quality assurance and improvement of social work practice
 - Advise the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) and/or wider Council in complex or controversial cases and on case or other law relating to social work practice
 - Function at the strategic level of the Professional Capabilities Framework
- 2.3 Hannah Scaife has been the Principal Social Worker for Adults since May 2019. Until the restructure at the end of 2022, Hannah was supervised by the DASS, Denise (Anne) Clarke and is now supervised by the Service Director, Kenny Braidwood. Regular meetings have been introduced between the DASS and the PSW. The PSW is part of the senior leadership team within Adult Social Care.
- 2.4 Hannah has also been the co-chair of the National Adult Principal Social Worker Network since September 2022, which involves leading the network, occasionally deputising for the Chief Social Worker, and being a member of the ADASS Executive.

3. Progress

- 3.1 The role of the PSW for Adults has expanded during 2023/24 with the creation of the new Quality Assurance Team. This team oversees policies, procedures, quality assurance of practice and preparedness for Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance.
- 3.2 The PSWs in adults and children and families also continue to oversee the work of the learning and development team, in particular Practice Education, Social Work Degree Apprenticeship Programme, Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) and, in adults, the Post Qualifying Standards (PQS) for Practice Supervisors.

3.3 HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS YEAR INCLUDE:

- ✓ Social Work Degree Apprenticeships - first graduations.
- ✓ Supporting the development and supervision of a new role: Specialist Housing Public Health Practitioner.
- ✓ Great feedback from the LGA Healthcheck survey.
- ✓ Launch of the [Practice Standards](#).
- ✓ Launch of the [Workforce Vision](#).
- ✓ Lecturing at the Universities of Bristol and Bath on strengths-based practice and human rights.



Co-author of book: *Principles of Practice by Principal Social Workers* (2023) Critical Publishing - launched at the Tavistock, hosted by the Chief Social Worker.

- ✓ Career Progression opportunities- Advanced Social Care Practitioners and Advanced Social Workers and Occupational Therapists.
- ✓ Representing Adult Social Care on the Disability Equality Taskforce.
- ✓ Highly successful Adult Social Care Conference, October 2023 with a focus on local practice, equality, diversity and inclusion and speakers from South Glos Race Equality Network, Diversity Trust and Disabled Employees Group. Approximately 150 people attended.
- ✓ Creative Solutions Board Steering Group.
- ✓ Representing Adult Social Care strategically supporting the Asylum Contingency Hotel.
- ✓ ConnectED Conference March 2024 jointly with Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and Age UK to celebrate World Social Work Day attended by approximately 200 people (hybrid event) including those with lived expertise of adult social care.



4. Quality Practice

- 4.1 The Care Act statutory guidance for PSWs sets out that we: “Lead and oversee excellent social work practice, support and develop arrangements for excellent practice, support effective social work supervision and decision making”.
- 4.2 This has been a busy year with the following achievements:
- Launch of new QA Team with the creation of new roles of Policies, Procedures and Quality Assurance Manager, and also a fixed-term Policy Writer led by the PSW
 - Launch of the [Practice Standards](#)
 - Launch of the [Workforce Vision](#)
 - Launch of the new [adult social care toolkit](#) for policies and procedures
 - [Strengths-based audit](#) approach adapted to also be used by Occupational Therapy and Mental Capacity Act Audits
 - Launch of assurance process for supervision
 - Further embedding our strengths-based and trauma-informed practice models
 - Launch of the Quality Assurance Task and Finish Group which has a 4 year development plan.
- 4.3 We are making slow but steady progress to achieving our target that every worker receives an audit of their work every six months. This has been a challenge to achieve due to workforce pressures and continues to be an area of focus for us. The feedback we receive from people and their families as part of the audit process has been especially helpful and shows us that 89% of people who gave feedback last year felt that they achieved the outcomes they wanted to from the social care intervention.

4.4 FUTURE PRIORITIES

4.5 Adult Social Care have signed up to the Social Care Future vision and joined their Community of Practice in 2023.



This is an exciting change for us which builds on our strengths-based practice and the 3 Conversations Model. Working with people who draw on social care support and their loved ones and carers, we want to reimagine how we work, and optimise creative, self-directed support whenever we can. Social Care Future’s vision is about all of us- not an us and them approach- if we focus on good lives, we all benefit as a wider community and as a workforce.

For us, these differences are described within our new **Practice Standards** - we want the person to be at the heart of everything we do. We focus on people as individuals and get to know their unique stories and interests, hopes and dreams. This includes being culturally intelligent, as we ask people about their culture, spirituality and community by attending to their **cultural values**.

5. Workforce Development

- 5.1 The Care Act statutory guidance for PSWs sets out that we: “Lead the development of excellent Social Workers”.

5.2 PRACTICE EDUCATION

- 5.3 We take a ‘one profession’ approach to practice education, and our programme runs jointly between adults and children’s services. Over the last year, we have supported 28 social work students across the Department for People (excluding Social Work Degree Apprentices) from the universities of West of England, Bristol, Bath and Frontline.
- 5.4 Approximately 65% of these students go onto be employed at South Gloucestershire Council on graduating. Most of those that choose not to stay do so because they wish to return to their hometown or city.
- 5.5 We provide a Managing Practice Learning Programme to enable Social Workers to progress to become Practice Educators by achieving BASW PEPS 1 and 2 (British Association of Social Workers, Practice Educator Professional Standards). This programme is also available to external Social Workers from organisations such as Avon and Wiltshire Partnership NHS Trust (AWP), Adoption West, Five Rivers Fostering, Fostering Foundation and Barnardo’s.
- 5.6 It has been challenging to attract adult Social Workers to complete PEPS 2 standards (enabling them to support final year student placements). This is due to a decline in the number of Social Workers with 2 years + experience (a requirement of BASW PEPS) and that Social Workers who achieve PEPS 2 often then go onto progress to Senior Practitioners. This is being addressed by the introduction of the role of Advanced Social Worker: progression that enables people to remain in practice and not management. Also, we are planning to adapt the PQS programme (please see below) so that we enable supervisors to achieve both PQS and PEPS qualifications simultaneously when possible. Finally, we are working harder with people who have achieved PEPS to maintain their currency (a requirement of BASW PEPS) by continuing to assess learners in a broader range of settings such as NQSWs and SW apprentices.
- 5.7 Our Practice Education Lead, Sally Norris, also chairs the Regional Practice Education Forum and moderation panel. She works in collaboration with the south west region to support the Step Up to Social Work programme. She, along with the PSWs is also a strategic partner with the universities of Bristol, Bath and West of England and supports teaching and assessment panels on the social work programmes.

5.8 ASSESSED AND SUPPORTED YEAR IN EMPLOYMENT (ASYE)

- 5.9 We take a ‘one profession’ approach to ASYE, and our programme runs jointly between adults and children’s services. Over the last year, we have supported 22 Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) in adults.
- 5.10 Feedback of the ASYE programme shows great satisfaction rates with the support provided at South Gloucestershire Council: 90% received excellent support from their Assessor; 84% received excellent support from their Professional Development Adviser (PDA) and 90% received excellent support from the ASYE Lead, Georgina Burgess.

- 5.11 Protected caseloads is something that was highlighted as a challenge by 40% of respondents, which we have addressed for the next cohort by setting expectations around safe workloads more clearly with the **Workforce Vision** in adult’s services and the children’s services’ **Improvement Plan**.
- 5.12 Our ASYE Lead, Georgina Burgess, is a key member of the Regional ASYE Group, and works in close partnership nationally with Skills for Care. During 2023, Georgina has spoken at a conference about Neurodiversity and received very positive feedback.

5.13 SOCIAL WORK DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP

- 5.14 We take a ‘one profession’ approach to the social work degree apprenticeship, and our programme runs jointly between adults and children’s services, led by the PSW for Adults.
- 5.15 During this year, we have supported 16 social work degree apprentices, and in addition to this, our first cohort of 6 apprentices graduated, of which 4 have started their ASYE within Adult Social Care and two within children’s services- 100% have continued their employment with South Gloucestershire Council.



- 5.16 For the October 2024 cohort, we will be trialling a new HEI provider.
- 5.17 We have successfully applied for Apprenticeship Funding from the Department of Health and Social Care, which will enable us to create temporary posts to support the practice education of social work apprentices, and the coordination of the programme.

5.18 CAREER PROGRESSION

- 5.19 The **Workforce Vision** was launched in 2023 which sets out our strengths-based and compassionate approach; our workforce planning including attraction, retention, recruitment, career progression, approach to Agency/ Locum workers; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Induction; Supervision; Personal Development & Performance Reviews (PDPRS); Audits; safe workloads; driving; flexible working; wellbeing; continual professional development (CPD) and professional registration and strategic partnerships.
- 5.20 Our career progression programme which offers twice yearly opportunities for Social Care Practitioners, Occupational Therapists and Social Workers to progress to advanced roles continues to be a success, and to date we have appointed in adult social work 28 Advanced Social Workers and 28 Advanced Social Care Practitioners. Of these only 2 Social Workers have left (one to return to their home country for personal reasons) and 2 Social Care Practitioners (one who retired).
- 5.21 We continue to support Social Workers to train and maintain their qualifications as Best Interest Assessors (BIAs) and Approved Mental Health Practitioners (AMHPs).

- 5.22 Our Specialist Learning and Development Consultant (Adult Social Care), Joanne Worthington has produced a brilliant [Career Progression Overview](#) for staff and managers.
- 5.23 Post Qualifying Standards (PQS) for Practice Supervisors, will be running for the 3rd cohort starting in July 2024. To date, 11 supervisors have demonstrated that they have successfully met the standards, and 4 supervisors have gone onto become mentors for other supervisors completing the programme.

5.24 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 5.25 Learning and development continue to be a core strength within the Department for People and social work specifically. Our training offer continues to be rated very highly (see Feedback section below).
- 5.26 A Core Training matrix is in development led by Joanne Worthington with all Team Managers to ensure that all teams and roles can have clearly defined and bespoke learning and development opportunities.

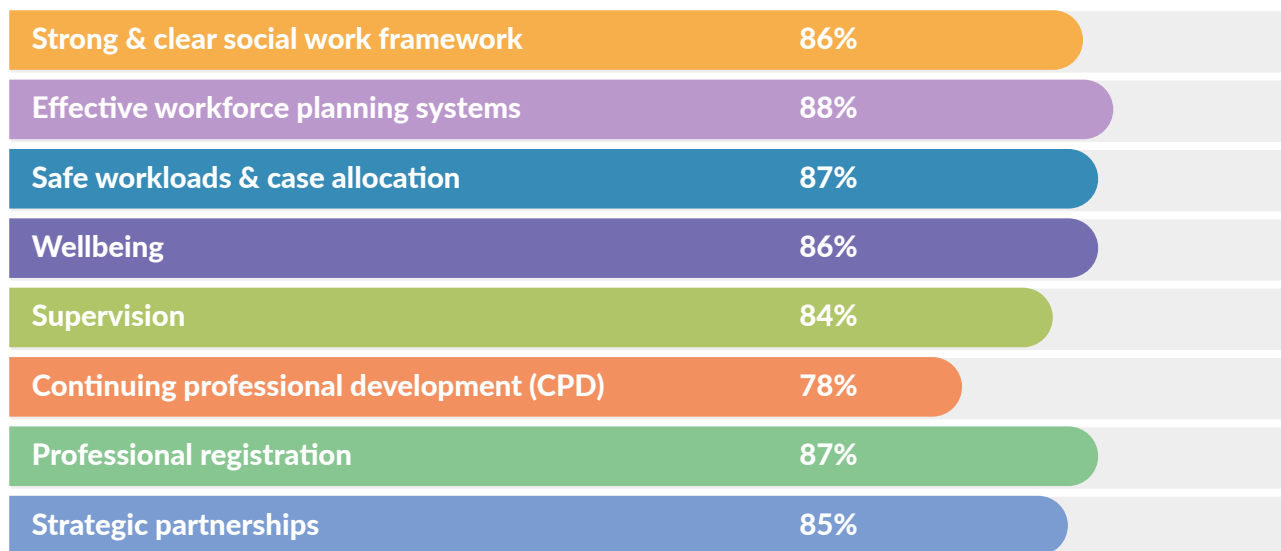
5.27 RESEARCH

- 5.28 The PSW for Adults continues to lead the South Gloucestershire team of the [ConnectED Project](#) which is a National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) funded project that aims to help decision-makers in Adult Social Care (ASC) make better decisions by growing their capacity to use research.
- 5.29 The ConnectED project has been fully co-produced with the Service Users and Carers Group (SUCAG) and that has been something that has been particularly successful and appreciated by the wider adult social care team, as people who draw on care and support and their carers have been central to delivering workshops, sharing their expertise and speaking at conferences.
- 5.30 We have also used NIHR Pre-doctoral Local Authority Fellowship (PLAF) funding to support a Social Worker to achieve her pre-doctoral Masters, who successfully graduated this year.
- 5.31 South Gloucestershire Council also continues to support other research projects, this year supporting research into How Adult Social Care Workers Support Parents with Learning Disabilities.

5.32 FEEDBACK FROM STAFF

5.33 Local Government Association (LGA) Healthcheck results released in March 2023 were very positive for social work. It demonstrated that our registered Social Workers are feeling well supported but feel they lack time to complete CPD. These scores are higher than our last year scores in every domain and higher than the national average in every domain.

Delivery of standards



5.34 This has been reinforced by our internal assurance process for supervision, where supervisees have given the following feedback that they receive:



5.35 PAY DISPUTE

- 5.36 There has been an ongoing dispute between Unison members and South Gloucestershire Council in light of the market factor payment awarded to children's Social Workers in 2021. This has resulted in strike action by Social Workers and Occupational Therapists in adult social care.
- 5.37 To assist in resolving this, there has been a pay comparison exercise undertaken jointly with colleagues in Unison, the PSW and Adult Social Care Programme Manager.

5.38 EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- 5.39 This has been a key focus of the last year as we've focused on: improving the collection of equalities data of the people we serve; race awareness training for social care staff across adults and children's services and race awareness training for managers- this has been very successful and we shared our anti-racist pledges at the adult social care conference. We have also undertaken research with the South Glos Race Equality Network (SGREN) who collected feedback from people who draw on care and support in South Gloucestershire who are from minoritised ethnicities; the introduction of the reasonable adjustment toolkit across the whole council which was launched at the adult social care conference with a very well-received speech about disability equality by the chair of the Disabled Employee Group, Jane Edwards who is an adult social work senior practitioner. Adult social care has also led the way with the start of a Neurodiversity employee group, started by an Advanced Social Care Practitioner in adult social care. We have also had a focus on LGBTQ+ with Professor Paul Willis and Berkeley Wilde from the Diversity Trust presenting local research findings at the adult social care conference.



6. Making Safeguarding Personal

- 6.1 The Care Act statutory guidance for PSWs sets out that we: “Lead on ensuring the quality and consistency of social work practice in fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities”.
- 6.2 Following a restructure, the PSW now provides professional supervision to the Safeguarding Manager as well as taking part in all internal safeguarding audits.
- 6.3 The Safeguarding Manager has this year started to run extremely successful Provider Forums to increase networking, skills and confidence around safeguarding and CPD opportunities.
- 6.4 The Safeguarding Team have also co-facilitated training sessions both internally for practitioners and also at our local HEIs.
- 6.5 SAR for Adult K was published in January 2024. Learning events for all teams across the Safeguarding Adults Board will take place in April 2024.
- 6.6 The SAB Annual report and business plan can be viewed here.

7. PSW Network Activity

- 7.1 Since September 2022 the PSW for Adults has been co-chair of the National PSW Network. This involves being a member of the ADASS Executive and sitting on a number of national groups including the Workforce Roundtable led by Social Work England.
- 7.2 The chair team have been working on the following priorities:



Overarching focus on compassionate leadership and wellbeing

Social work representation in the NHS

Equality, diversity and inclusion (within the network, our organisations and in social work practice)

Supporting and evidencing great practice: preparing for assurance – demonstrating the value of social work

Workforce development (education, attraction, recruitment and retention)

Championing community based, person-centred practice

7.3 ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

- Leading quarterly PSW Network Events and a joint annual conference in Birmingham with the Children and Families PSW Network. We have welcomed brilliant speakers during this year including: Lyn Romeo CBE, Chief Social Worker; James Bullion CBE Chief Inspector for CQC; Professor Jill Manthorpe CBE, and many more;
- Designed and delivered the **PSW Session for ADASS's Spring Seminar** in April 2023, highlighting the importance of the relationship between the DASS and the PSW and the role of assurance preparation.
- Hosted and led the **Social Work England Social Work Week session** March, 2023 on 'Principals of Practice'
- Co-hosted **Social Work England Social Work Week sessions** in 2023 and 2024 on 'Promote the Vote' with Elaine James and Claire Reeves (Bradford Metropolitan Council) and co-produced **Promote the Vote Practice Guide** jointly with Bradford practitioners, BASW and LD England.
- **'Principles of Practice by Principal Social Workers' Book launch**, July 2023, hosted by Tavistock & Portman, introduced by the Chief Social Worker.
- Attended the **ADASS Leading in Care Summit**, Sept 2023
- Co-authored the Chief Social Worker's **Proportional Assessment Approaches Guidance** in collaboration with the voice of lived experience and the regional PSW Network chairs. Launched in October 2023 through a **SCIE webinar**.
- Co-hosted with **Social Work England World Social Work Week** webinar in 2024 with the Chief Social Work's office at the Department of Health and Social Care and the AMHP Lead Network Chairs on **What next for adult social work and adult social care in 2024?**

7.4 Hannah Scaife's tenure as co-chair will end in August 2024.

8. Priorities for 2024

8.1 The top priorities for the coming year are:

- 1 Supporting the council through it's first CQC inspection, helping to demonstrate and evidence the great practice of Social Workers in South Glos, and how they make a difference to people's lives.
- 2 To grow the Practice Education support within the Department for People, building on the successes of the undergraduate practice education support to further enhance the experiences of social work degree apprentices.
- 3 To raise the PSW profile as a leader in the Council through supporting adult social care colleagues in connecting with the delivery of the new Council Plan which reflects a commitment to the social model of disability and reducing inequalities.
- 4 To co-produce national practice guidance on Equality in Social Work Practice.



Thank you for reading.
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