



**Belfast Health and Social Care Trust**

caring supporting improving together

**Paper Ref. Num.** P181-2026 A

**Note:- To be completed by HQ meeting organiser**

**Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Meeting Template Sheet (v11.25)**

**Purpose of paper**

For Oversight

If other purpose please specify

**Meeting** TB Public

If other meeting please specify

**Presenter**

**Kerrylee Weatherall**

Enter Other Presenter Name Here

**Date of meeting**

8<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**Title of paper (Maximum of 300 characters)** Report to BHSCT Trust Board: Progress with Social Work Recruitment and Retention 5th December 2025

**Background (Maximum of 1500 characters)** The deficit in supply of social workers regionally has created significant challenges for all HSCTs and in July 2025 the BHSCT performance in relation to the children’s workforce deficit was aligned to the new SPPG Support Intervention Framework with targets agreed to reduce vacancies and this is also monitored in the Trust statutory functions action plan. BHSCT has undertaken targeted initiatives to effectively address workforce challenges in social work. Recruitment efforts, professional development initiatives, and wellbeing programs are starting to deliver measurable improvements.

The Trust Social Work Recruitment and Retention strategic group is chaired by the Deputy EDSW and oversees 3 workstreams which span across all social care directorates in the Trust. Due to the particular deficits in Children’s Community Services (CCS) there is also a CCS recruitment and retention steering group Chaired by DSW for CCS and a Children’s Service Workforce Planning Group was established in May 2025 chaired by the Director for finance aimed at the progression of a business case to SPPG to ensure workforce capacity meets demand.

Key challenges remain (particularly within Family Support and Looked After Children’s services), however a more positive trajectory is beginning to emerge, with clear evidence of increased staffing, enhanced support structures, and strengthened retention strategies.

This report sets out some of the initiatives that have been progressed and the outcomes achieved.

**Date considered at Exec Team (If Applicable)**

8<sup>th</sup> December 2025

**Options for consideration (Maximum of 1500 characters)**

For sharing and recognition



Working together



Excellence



Openness & Honesty



Compassion

<b>Recommendations (Maximum of 1500 Characters)</b> Executive Team have recommended this report be shared with Trust Board as examples of good practice.	
<b>Proposed Onward Consideration</b>	Choose an item.
<b>If other</b>	

**Note:-**

***Any papers accompanying this template should not exceed 10 pages in length.***

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- (1) Orientation of paper is set so that the content of the paper can be read***
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- (3) Append any papers to this coversheet starting on the next page***

Insert/Copy/Paste any additional information from this point