



Workforce Development Strategy 2024-2027

Swindon: Where we are better together

Foreword

Corporate Director of Integrated Adult Social Care and Lead Cabinet Member

A workforce strategy to guide us

As the Corporate Director of Integrated Adult Social Care, I am delighted to present this comprehensive Adult Services Workforce Strategy, a testament to our unwavering commitment to understanding and enhancing the well-being of our valued workforce. This strategy reflects our dedication to cultivating a skilled, compassionate, and informed workforce capable of navigating the evolving landscape of Adult Services. Through collaborative efforts and forward-thinking initiatives, we aim to ensure that every individual receives the high-quality support and care they deserve enabling them to lead a fulfilled life.

Adult Social Care is more than a gatekeeper of funded residential and domiciliary services; it exists to enable adults of all ages and with a range of conditions to live their best life, either at home, or somewhere away from their home. When done well it can be transformative. It is this transformation that the adult social care workforce will deliver in line with our vision for people to have “Lives, Not Services” and our strategy which sets out the simple, but fundamental elements required to support everyone to have a good life, a home, a friend, and a purpose.

Every single person working for Swindon Adult Services has a role to play in delivering on our vision and priorities, and we would not achieve any of this without them. Our successes rely on having the right people, trained and engaged and working collaboratively both in and outside the organisation. Never has this been more important as the environment in which we continue to operate in is increasingly challenging due to a variety of factors, including an aging population, a rise in the numbers of people with complex needs, budgetary constraints, and a shortage of skilled professionals.

To address these challenges and to build a sustainable future for Adult Services in Swindon, we have developed a 3-year workforce strategy and plan. The purpose of these is to outline a comprehensive framework that encompasses recruitment, retention, training, career progression, and employee well-being and it recognises the importance of a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the communities we serve. As Corporate Director of Integrated Adult Social Care I am committed to creating the environment for best practice to flourish, so our services, and teams recognise and promote the rights, strengths and wellbeing of the people, families and communities they serve, particularly those who face multiple inequalities, whose voices are seldom heard.

I extend my gratitude to all those who contributed to shaping this strategy, and I am confident that our collective efforts will significantly impact the lives of those we serve. Together, let us strive for excellence in adult social care, making a positive and lasting difference in our community.

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Executive Summary

At Swindon Borough Council we have a People Strategy which has been developed to support the organisation. It was designed to focus the organisation on doing more of what we do well, as well as focusing on areas that will help us to deliver even better services.

We want to make sure we are set up to understand important workforce matters and develop an environment where we feel confident to explore and learn – without blame if we don't get it right first time.

The People Strategy focuses teams on three commitments which help us all to be **'At our Best'**:

- Learning Organisation
- Improving Performance
- Employee Experience



This workforce strategy and associated plan defines our future priorities specifically in Adults and brings to life how we will contribute to the delivery of the corporate commitments.

So that:

- Our teams are able to be 'At our Best'
- We have service stability
- We have reduced cost pressures (with less money needing to be spent on recruitment and training)
- We have future proofed our workforce
- Our colleagues are happy and proud of the work they do
- Our residents experience appropriate levels of service

All priorities are underpinned by our corporate values and behaviours and more information to bring these themes to life can be found on [page 9](#) onwards.

Organisational Context

Political Leadership and Direction

In May 2023, the council had a change of administration. This has been hugely significant as it is the first time in 20 years that we've seen this happen at Swindon Borough Council.

In August 2023, we also appointed a new Chief Executive so at a Council level it very much feels like we have entered into what will be a sustained period of transformation.

We now have our Swindon Plan, developed to help ensure Swindon and everyone in the community can flourish and thrive in the future. To do this we are focussing relentlessly on three big priority missions over the next decade which make up our Swindon Plan.

These are all centered around a fairer, better and greener Swindon.

Finances

Finances in local government continue to be a topic of rich discussion having been under pressure for over a decade. The County Councils Network (CCN) and Society of County Treasurers (SCT), which conducted the budget survey of 41 of county and unitary authorities, says that a combination of stubbornly high inflation, rising demand and 'broken' provider markets for children in care are leading to the historically high overspends for councils. Whilst in Swindon, our finances are not as challenging as some other local authorities, we cannot rest on our laurels and the newly appointed leadership have already confirmed that we must transform services in order to be able to afford and deliver against the three 10-year priority missions. At a time where new visions come to fruition, the ways of working and expectations will also likely change. It is key that our valued workforce understand the reasons for change, are bought into the new vision and feel well supported through these exciting but changing times.

Adult Services strategy

Everyone in Adult Services, will contribute to the council missions by working towards their own priorities as set out in the Adult Services strategy – through this strategy 10 priorities have been identified and will set the local focus.

OUR MISSIONS



FAIRER

Making Swindon a fairer place, reducing disadvantages and reducing big disparities in life expectancy, education levels and social justice.



BETTER

Creating a town ready for the challenges of the coming decades. Where possible, leading town centre improvement and creating more affordable housing with the private sector.



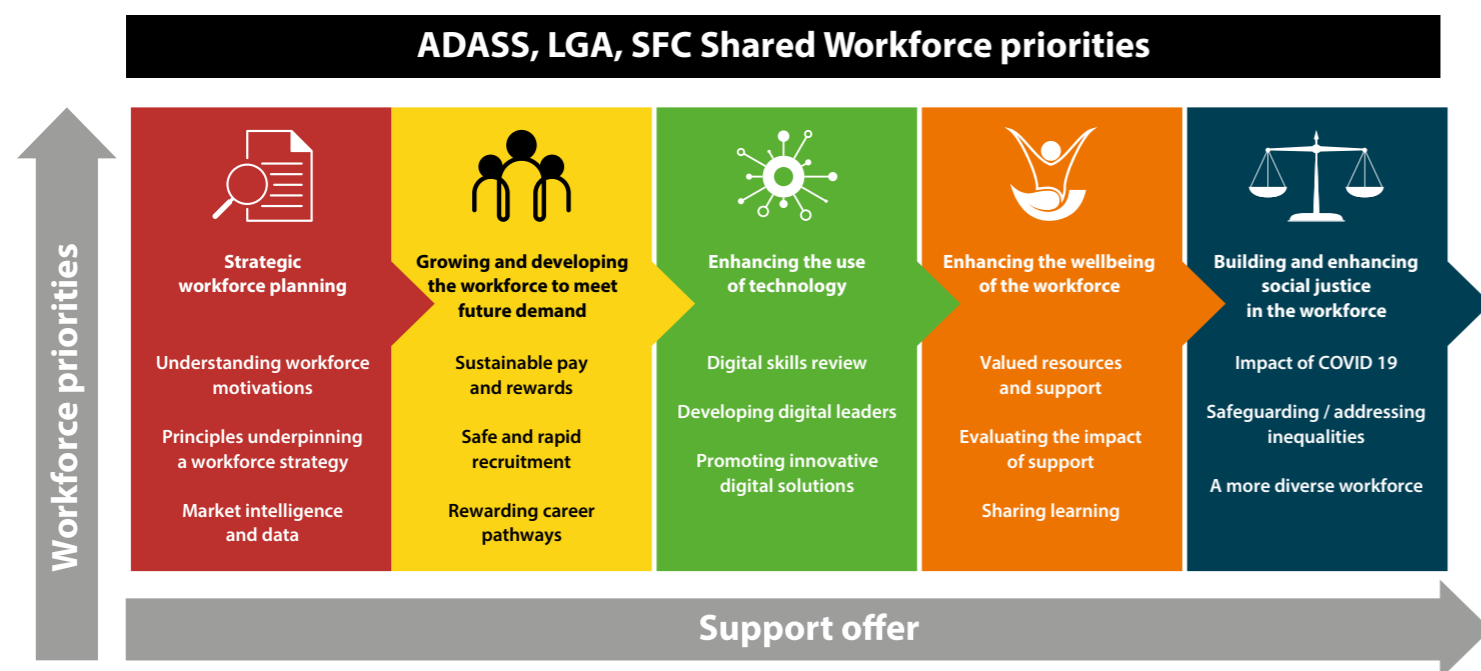
GREENER

Fully playing our part as a council and a town in combatting climate change. Working with communities to find new ways of doing things that help, not hinder, the natural environment.



It sets out the local priorities specific to Adult Services which will contribute to the council missions but also that of the shared ADASS South West workforce priorities. The integration of Health & Social Care has become a huge topic of conversation nationally, particularly since COVID-19 where it was evidenced that we can achieve so much more together when the NHS and local government work more closely together to jointly deliver for local communities.

The ADASS shared South West priorities are:



This Adult Services workforce strategy has been developed with our Adult assessments, Commissioning & Contracting services and Quality teams in mind and will help:

- These teams to deliver our action plan/priorities
- Swindon to contribute to the South West shared workforce priorities and
- A successful delivery of the Swindon Plan

We will need to do this by working together and focusing on those areas of the employee lifecycle where we know we require additional strength and resilience, based on what we know of the ever changing external market and what you are telling us.

It's important to note, that even though the data has not been informed by all teams in Adult Services, the support element of the strategy is relevant to all teams across Adults e.g. supervision, Learning & Development access, wellbeing and celebration.

Our Corporate Values and Behaviours

Just as important as what we set out to do in our workforce strategy is why and how we do it and our corporate values and behaviours should always be front and centre in anything that we do. The organisational values express what is important to us in our organisation – the ethics, ideals and principals upon which we place significant worth. These values seek to drive our choices, decisions and behaviours and are what our overarching People Strategy sets out to encourage, embed and reward. Following the engagement of council colleagues in the Big Behaviours Conversation and an engagement and co-design approach, we have three values, designed by colleagues.

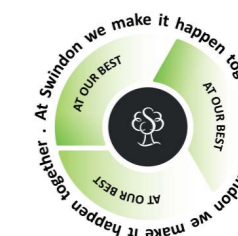
Our values are:



At Swindon what we do really matters:
We love 'our' Swindon. We want the best for it. We turn up each and every day to have impact, a place and people to be proud of.



At Swindon we do things right:
We are accountable to our residents and ourselves to make the best decisions we can, to try new things to make Swindon thrive now and in the future.



At Swindon we make it happen together:
We work together, with our communities, across the Council and with our partners to get the best we can collectively for Swindon.

Our behaviours are:

Underpinning our values are a set of behaviours that express what we expect all colleagues to demonstrate when working with each other and when providing services to our local communities (again, these were completely redesigned with colleagues). It is important to remember, our behaviours are not a set of rules or constraints, they are a way for colleagues to describe what is most important. Our behaviours provide a development pathway, a way to stretch and/or maintain excellence. This is our commitment to being at our best through managing our performance.

Delivering Performance and Results	Results	Leading Self and Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being determined to achieve our outcomes by committing to the highest standards of individual and collective performance. • Holding purposeful conversations which challenge, recognise contribution, giving and receiving relevant feedback. • Being responsible for delivering my results. Results that contribute to the wider outcomes for Swindon Borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a Swindon wide view. Understanding the impact of the political landscape for our organisation. • Looking for appropriate opportunities to work internally and externally in partnership to find new and sustainable ways to do things. • Being bold, willing to learn in order to meet the needs of our residents. • Being proactive and accountable – making a difference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting in a fair, ethical and authentic way, demonstrating mutual respect and treating one another as professionals. • Fostering trust, developing ability and accountability. • Developing the conditions for ourselves and others to thrive to create a one team spirit that we are proud of.

Our Workforce Journey so far

Since 2021, under new senior leadership in Adult Services, we have seen significant investment in our existing workforce and bringing in of new talent and although we haven't had a formal workforce strategy before, that doesn't mean that we haven't been prioritising our people and working hard to listen and improve the working lives of our biggest asset, our workforce.

Our journey in recent years has been about laying the right foundations, both corporately and locally within Adult Services. By doing so, we are no longer so focused on the hygiene factors and can focus our attention to other initiatives that will create a richer, more fulfilling employee experience and culture as part of our strategy.

Pay and Reward

Pay & Reward has for a number of years at the Council been a bone of contention and it's always been clear that without our colleagues, we would never be able to deliver on our ambitions for Swindon and its people. It was also clear that if we wanted to retain colleagues and help them to progress in their career and attract new, great talent to our organisation, that we needed a pay and reward structure that is competitive and able to keep pace with the market. On 1st September 2023 the council launched their new pay and reward offering for all colleagues which has enabled us to be able to introduce a fairer and equitable pay and reward offer that reflects modern market rates and has harmonised terms and conditions across the wider Council to ensure fairness and consistency across the board. The pay and reward outcome had a positive impact for the majority of our colleagues and has massively helped us to recruit to more of our vacancies.

Flexibility

Following on from the impact of COVID-19, we now work in a hybrid manner which provides flexibility and work-life balance for our colleagues.

One of our colleagues has stated:

“ I like working in an environment that is somewhat flexible, I have the autonomy and yet the support I need to do the best I can. ”

We also offer a greater proportion of part-time contracts than nationally. Nationally, 22% of contracts for Social Workers are part-time, whereas we offer 28% of our contracts are part-time. For Occupational Therapists, 47% of contracts are part-time, and for Assistant Care Managers, 21% of our contracts are part-time.

Rewarding Work

Feedback from a survey we sent out to colleagues regarding our workforce highlighted that colleagues feel that their work in ASC is rewarding and everybody works hard to achieve the best outcomes for the people they support.

Some of the comments we received include:

“ I chose to be a social worker because I wanted to make a difference. Every action, decision or choice we make can have a massive impact on each person we support... As long as we strive forward together with the same shared goal with integrity and passion, then I will be in Swindon Borough Council. ”

“ I hope that every impact I make will do some good for the present and the future as my children grow and as I age. One day I will be that adult that needs statutory support and I hope some of the positive changes I make today will still be felt in years to come. ”



Quality Assurance

In 2022 we launched a clear governance structure for Adult Services Operations which oversees the quality, performance (productivity and outcomes) and capacity of Adult Services Operations teams and is underpinned by our Quality Assurance Framework. A Quality Assurance Framework is in development for commissioning and will be implemented in 2024.

Quality & Risk Forums (Q&RF) and New Placement & Rights Forum (NPRF) were also introduced in August 2022 and continue to take place to ensure that the quality of all assessments is sound and that risks are appropriately managed for every person we support. This has been an investment in colleagues to support improvement of practice and their confidence and to give leadership regular oversight of any capacity / performance issues which might be creating pressures in certain teams so we can act faster than we otherwise might be able to.

We have continued to place an emphasis on the importance of supervisions and direct observations. In 2024 we refreshed our supervision policy and framework which is underpinned by At Our Best values and behaviours framework. Supervisions are focused heavily on prioritising the well-being and good practice of our workforce and ensuring that they are receiving monthly feedback from their managers to support performance. Annual direct observations of practice and supervisory practice form an integral part of that feedback, providing opportunities for reflection and development of practice.

When there are quality concerns, particularly relating to the safety of an individual, we have a robust procedure to record and develop a Safety Action Plan which outlines what actions need to be taken to improve the situation and any future situations.

In 2022, we audited our supervisions and found that colleagues felt supported through the supervisions and felt as though their well-being was being prioritised.

A colleague praised supervisions, stating:

“ *I have always had support through very good supervision.* ”

Colleague Survey

The All Swindon Borough Council Colleague Survey (October 2023) highlighted for Adults that, where we are getting ‘people management’ right, colleagues are far more likely to indicate positive experiences and outcomes with all other areas of work life. An Adults’ Service specific ‘People Manager’ survey was then launched in February 2024 to capture further insights in order to understand where we are performing well and areas for further development. We had a 58% response rate.

We asked colleagues a set of questions about Supervisors and Team Managers to capture:

Topic	Results
Completion rate of My Performance Conversations (supervisions).	90% of respondents stated that they have regular MPCs. 67% of respondents suggested that their supervisions are “very effective”.
Whether colleagues are being given actionable feedback.	92% of respondents claim that they receive actionable feedback.
Whether colleagues are comfortable raising risks and issues.	91% of respondents said they were always confident to raise risks and concerns with their supervisor and 82.7% of respondents feel that they are always comfortable to raise issues and concerns with their team managers.
What colleagues’ value in a supervisor and manager.	Respondents reported they value that their supervisors are supportive, approachable, they listen and are available. Respondents valued their Team Managers being supportive, communicating well, listening, being available and approachable.
How our managers and supervisors communicate	59.5% of responses stated that colleagues felt that day-to-day information is “Extremely [or] fairly clear”.
Whether key messages are being shared effectively.	97.6% of responses claimed that key messages and priorities are communicated “Extremely [or] fairly well”.

The intelligence gathered from the survey will be used to create a ‘People Managers’ development programme in Adults.

Induction

In 2023, a new localised induction programme specifically for Adult Services (practitioners and commissioning colleagues) was launched, giving new hires an important overview of the vision and expectations of the directorate. It was co-designed with our colleagues and provides training on how to approach work from a strength-based person-centred perspective, and how to use our case management system. Feedback received from participants suggests that it has directly impacted the quality of their joining experience.

Growing our own

In previous years we’ve clocked market trends and felt first-hand how difficult it was to recruit to our registered roles, for example Social Worker and Occupational Therapist, and we knew that we needed a longer-term strategy of growing our own practitioners. Since February 2020 we have been running a Social Work Degree Apprenticeship scheme in partnership with Gloucester University, offering a 36-month apprenticeship which aids in the development of skills and the achievement of a Social Work degree. This highlights our commitment to investing in the workforce.

In 2023, we saw our first cohort of apprentices on this scheme achieve their degree and they are now Newly Qualified Social Workers in post at the council. We continue to enrol 2 – 4 colleagues on the programme every year and have ambitions to extend a similar opportunity out to other registered and non-registered roles which are hard to recruit for in our service, for example Occupational Therapy and roles within commissioning.

Investment

We have a variety of learning and development opportunities available to our colleagues to support the development of both their core and technical competencies. Training opportunities, include training commissioned by SBC Learning and Development, Swindon Safeguarding Partnership, SBC Leadership and Management resources, and we have a corporate subscription with Research in Practice. We value opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) and our supervision policy highlights that practitioners should spend at least half a day per month investing in their CPD.

In September 2023 we launched a Supervisor Development Programme to support the development of our supervisors in accordance with the Post-qualifying Standards for Practice Supervisors and have two active cohorts on the programme.

“ **The workshops are fantastic. I have really enjoyed taking the time to explore the reflective models. The trainer is really engaging and captivating. I never feel like I drift off and I give it my full attention. There is a lot of work to do but I can see that I am growing into a better practitioner and supervisor.** ”

The strength of the training and support in place was reflected in the Adults survey (February 2023). Of the people who had a view (i.e. agreed or disagreed 85% said that agreed or strongly agreed that ‘in the Adult Services directorate there are arrangements to support improvement and sharing learning, including training courses’. The LGA Peer Review has also highlighted that the colleagues interviewed were very positive about learning and development opportunities across the workforce.

Wellbeing

At the Council, we have developed a Wellbeing Vision and Action Plan which sets out our aim to improve the well-being support at the Council. Currently, we have created Wellbeing Champions- colleagues who have been trained in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) and who offer signposting and encouragement to their colleagues. There are currently 23 colleagues from across the council (not Adults specific) who are MHFA trained.

Our “Boost” initiative encourages colleagues to maximise their energy and includes activities such as lunchtime sessions at the gym, heritage walks and crafting sessions where colleagues can take part in crocheting or knitting classes.

Celebrating our workforce

In 2022 and 2023 colleagues from across Adult Services were nominated for our Annual Staff Awards and we had deserved nominees, finalists and winners across many categories. We also have a regular shout out feature in the monthly newsletter where we all have the opportunity to recognise the fantastic work and behaviours of our colleagues which has given a real boost to morale and engagement on the whole.

Workforce Data Profile data is as at 1 April 2024

The following data sets provide a snapshot of our current colleague profile. Annual data was taken between 1 April 2023 and 1 April 2024. Any monthly data shown is as of 1 April 2024.

Our Workforce Profile	
Total FTE (does not include vacancies)	202.68 ASC Leadership – 8.70 Occupational Therapy Management – 2.00 Occupational Therapy Non-registered – 4.00 Occupational Therapy Registered – 8.37 Social Work Management – 28.26 Social Work Non-registered – 54.84 Social Work Registered – 70.07 Other Management – 1.92 Other Non-registered – 24.51 Please note ‘Other’ – Commissioning, Data & Quality Assurance, Transformation, Communications
Headcount (does not include vacancies)	215 ASC Leadership – 9 Occupational Therapy Management – 2 Occupational Therapy Non-registered – 4 Occupational Therapy Registered – 10 Social Work Management – 30 Social Work Non-registered – 57 Social Work Registered – 74 Other Management – 2 Other Non-registered – 27
% Permanent Workforce	92% social work 90% occupational therapy 100% ‘Other’
% of Swindon workforce that live in the Borough	c81%
Absence rate %	4.91% as at 1st April
Top 3 reasons for absence	Psychological (non-work related) Cold/Cough/Flu Gen & Gyn
Vacancy rate	In May 2024 (all figures are FTE) we had 53 vacancies across all roles in scope which equates to a 19% vacancy rate: -Social Work 38.4 roles vacant (21% of establishment) -Occupational Therapy 4 roles vacant (24% of establishment) -Other officers 10.6 roles vacant (12% of establishment) 16.4 fte worth of the 53 fte vacancies was at this time being covered by locums.

% Staff Turnover

Looking at year to date information turnover rate across this total population is at 14.46% annualised equating to 29 leavers in total.

Turn Over Rate - April 23 - March 24	Average Head Count	Leavers	Turn Over Rate
ASC Leadership	9.5	3	31.58%
OT Management	2	0	0.00%
OT Non-registered	3.5	0	0.00%
OT Registered	10.5	2	19.05%
Other Management	1.5	0	0.00%
Other Non-registered	23.5	3	12.77%
SW Management	28.5	3	10.53%
SW Non-Registered	51.5	8	15.53%
SW Registered	70	10	14.29%
Total	200.5	29	14.46%



Our Workforce Profile	
Wellbeing*	80.1%
Gender Split	80% female v's 20% male
Management** Gender Split	86% female v's 14% male
Race	Across the total population 80% of people (173) have declared their ethnicity. 20% (42) have not declared. 68% (147) of people have declared an ethnicity of white, 6% black, Asian or Indian and 6% other. 20% of people have not declared their ethnicity.

Age Range	20-29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60+
ASC Leadership	1	1	3	1	1
OT Management	0	0	0	0	1
OT Non-registered	1	1	0	1	1
OT Registered	0	0	5	4	1
Other Management	0	0	1	1	0
Other non-registered	3	3	9	4	6
SW Management	0	0	14	9	1
SW Non-Registered	6	6	16	12	6
SW Registered	6	6	20	21	2
Total	17	17	68	53	19

Our Workforce Profile	
Disability	Across the whole population 33 people have declared a disability which is 15% of all people. 17% of people have declared that they have no disability and 68% have not disclosed either way.
Average length of service	All role types - 8.64 years All management/leadership roles – 13.43 years Occupational Therapy all role types – 11.28 years Social Work all role types – 8.63 years Other roles – 10.31 years Average length of service for females is 8.99 years and males is 7.19 years
Positive Engagement Score*	59.9%
Apprenticeships	13 in total 3 x L3 – Adult Care Workers 1 x L5 – Operational/Departmental Manager 8 x L6 – Social Work Degree apprenticeships 1 x L7 – Senior Leader in Social Work & Care

*Wellbeing and Positive Engagement measure is extracted from our All Colleague Survey, conducted annually (it's the sum of people answering agree or strongly agree).

**Management includes: ASC Leadership, OT Management, Other Management and SW Management

What Our Colleagues are telling us

Colleague Engagement Survey



During September-October 2023 the organisation ran its first colleague engagement survey since new Chief Executive was appointed in August 2023. Our new CEO had asked for this survey to be run as she was keen to offer all colleagues a chance to share what it's like to work at SBC, knowing that this would help us to know how we're doing as an organisation and what we might need to focus on moving forwards.

The engagement index for Swindon Borough Council was 58.1% and for Adult Services it was slightly higher at 59.9%. Whilst this is positive, we must do more to increase our engagement levels year on year and our engagement index must be a success measure of our workforce strategy. We know that engagement can be seen as the magic ingredient for success. Engaged employees make fewer mistakes, take less time off sick, attract other high performing talent, their values align with the organisation and they go the extra mile to meet quality standards.

Both corporately and locally, the survey results have been very telling and will help guide us going forwards on those things that will make the biggest difference. The Corporate Management team have identified 3 core themes which will be a focus for the following year, they are:

1. Understanding barriers to participation
2. Making leadership more visible
3. Getting the basics right

In Adults we believe we are making some strong headway in to these areas. In engagement with our teams we have co-developed a new process for managing performance that complements our existing supervision policy, providing teams with the assurance that performance, supervision and wellbeing are all being prioritised and ensuring that we are focused on the right things more of the time.

Communication and visibility have been and will continue to be a key area of focus for leadership. A minimum of quarterly 'Adult Services Briefings' will continue as will the 'All Ears Board' – these are opportunities for all colleagues to hear important corporate and adult specific messages as well as having an opportunity to participate in and influence changes in the services. When looking at the engagement results for Adults specifically, we have identified the following 'key strengths' and 'areas for improvement' which have already been played back to teams:

Positive impacts	Things to do differently
Supportive line manager / supervisor	Better communication / sharing more frequent updates and plans
Supportive team / colleagues	Listening to and responding to colleagues working on the front line including spending time with teams to better understand functions and roles
Better staffing levels	Show they understand the waiting lists and pressures to front line practitioners.
Working from home / work life balance	Listen to and act on what colleagues say / suggest – You Said We Did
Being listened to / feeling heard	Ensure colleagues of all levels and roles have opportunity to provide feedback
Improvements in IT	Value colleague expertise and experience
Working together with internal teams and wider partners	
Training / learning new skills	

In addition to the three priorities identified by the corporate management team, Adults have developed their own priority which will be identifiable in our workforce strategy and subsequent action plan. It was identified through the analysis of the survey that people who reported having a positive relationship with their "people manager" were far more likely to score higher across all other categories, so in adult services we have decided that by "Supporting our People Managers" to be the best they can be, it will in turn have a positive impact on the adults workforce as a whole.

Top Workforce Challenges and Opportunities

The Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) Road Map provides a clear summary of the challenges Adult Services have and continue to face and a number of pertinent to Swindon, inter-related challenges have been identified:

<p>Swindon's growing and aging population</p>	<p>Swindon Borough Council has a population base of 233,200 with a higher proportion of people over the age of 65 than the national average and predictions are this trend will continue to grow. Between the last two censuses (held 2011 and 2021) the population of Swindon increased by 11.6% which was faster than both the national and South West averages. The challenges with Social Worker and Occupational Therapist recruitment in particular, and the growth expected in our over 65 category along with the more complex needs developing post covid, will put year on year pressure onto our existing services and council budget which will not be sustainable.</p> <p>If we assumed that Swindon would grow by the same rate again by 2031 and that nothing else changed between now and then in terms of how we met our Care Act responsibilities for this population, we'd need to have c10 more additional registered (social work and occupational therapy) roles with the following skills due to the increasingly complex nature of need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with people with mental illness and personality disorder and/or autistic people and people who experience self-neglect • People impacted by safeguarding, homelessness, trauma, criminal offending and victims of crime • Rights respecting practice • Dynamic, risk assessments, effective risk mitigation • Making decisions as part of a multiagency
<p>Difficulties nationally in recruiting to posts</p>	<p>In the South West recruitment generally of registered positions is challenging. There is a skills shortage and that's been reflected in our vacancy numbers over previous years. The South West Workforce Planning and Intelligence optioneering (HEE, March 2023) identified the South West as having the most challenging workforce gap, between supply and demand, for Occupational Therapy, which will result in an enduring 20% vacancy rate for 5 years or more.</p> <p>According to Skills for Care we also know that the number of enrolments into social work education has decreased by 2% in the last academic year. Postgraduate enrolments (making up 46% of enrolments) increased by 6% in 2021/22. Undergraduate enrolments (making up 54% of enrolments) decreased by 8% in 2021/22. In 2021/22 there were 4,430 leavers from social work courses.</p> <p>At Swindon we need to be smarter in terms of understanding our future demand (what skills we need, what numbers and when) and consider more strategically how we bridge that gap. By prioritising workforce planning and focusing on opportunities to grow more of our own internal talent will mean we can more proactively tackle this challenge head on. Currently we have a degree apprenticeship which is working well but we need to increase the number of apprenticeships and invest in alternative apprenticeships, different emerging talent opportunities and potentially international recruitment and promote better the career pathways that exist for registered roles. Existing pathways show how you could move from Business support to Assistant Care Manager/Assistant Occupational Therapist to Social Worker/Occupational Therapist then onto Assistant Team Manager, Team Manager, Service Manager, Head of Service and Director. We have a Service Manager and Head of Service currently doing Leadership Apprenticeships and have a real opportunity to sell the benefits and pathways more amongst this population. This will also support the ADASS shared workforce priorities.</p>
<p>Engagement and the important role of our front line managers</p>	<p>Local government needs a suitably skilled, well-motivated and engaged workforce that meets the changing needs of residents and can continue its work through challenging times. We therefore need to drive engagement and improve the working experience of colleagues.</p> <p>We know that the line manager stands as a foundational pillar in any organisation, connecting the strategic vision of leadership with the practical contributions of their team. This key business role serves to bridge the intricate layers of a business.</p> <p>Within the organisational hierarchy, the line manager plays an essential role and it was very clear from the feedback on our engagement survey that when people reported having an effective working relationship with their manager, they were far more likely to indicate positive scores in many of the other areas too, including, having a sense of achievement and feeling valued. By investing in the development of managers we would anticipate that it should in turn improve colleague experience overall.</p>

<p>Engagement and the important role of our front line managers</p>	<p>Within the organisational hierarchy, the line manager plays an essential role and it was very clear from the feedback on our engagement survey that when people reported having an effective working relationship with their manager, they were far more likely to indicate positive scores in many of the other areas too, including, having a sense of achievement and feeling valued.</p> <p>By investing in the development of managers we would anticipate that it should in turn improve colleague experience overall.</p>
<p>Inclusion and representation</p>	<p>We know from looking at Swindon data that potential health inequalities have been highlighted across the borough. This further highlights the ongoing requirement for our workforce to understand and support differing cultural needs.</p> <p>We know that diversity is crucial for businesses/organisations to build close relationships with their 'customers and that a community that doesn't have representatives in the organisation it looks to for support services may automatically feel separated from it.</p> <p>We have an opportunity to look at diversity and inclusion across our employee lifecycle aiming for a workforce that more accurately reflects the communities we serve.</p> <p>In addition to the better stronger relationships we can build directly with the community, having inclusive workplaces are also known to boost employee engagement - 83% of Millennials are actively engaged in their work when their companies foster a more inclusive work and inclusive organisations have the means of attracting more talent.</p> <p>Declaration rates for RACE are healthy at 80% however for disability it's only 32% so there's more work that Swindon needs to do in terms of raising declaration rates overall and then using that data to drive more inclusive practice, starting with recruitment.</p> <p>According to Korn Ferry (Global Consultancy firm) they say "To thrive, companies need to unlock the power and potential of all that talent, including women, people of different races, ethnicities and socioeconomic status, and those with different physical and cognitive abilities. In other words, they need inclusion"</p>
<p>Change readiness</p>	<p>In today's rapidly evolving landscape, local authorities in the UK are facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. In Swindon we are no different and we need to change and evolve to continue to meet the demands of those we work with to ensure we are fit for purpose now and into the future. At the heart of any successful change is the human element and we should equip colleagues with the necessary skills to manage themselves or lead others (if they are line managers) in change management.</p>
<p>Wellbeing</p>	<p>Anecdotally our colleagues are telling us their wellbeing is being impacted and this is somewhat reflected in absence rates also. It's a problem in Swindon and a problem nationally. According to Social work England it's because of the reinforcing cycle of stress, limited time to attend to personal needs, and the demands of social work poses a unique challenge for social workers and to leaders and the regulator of the social work profession.</p> <p>An opportunity (and a responsibility) to position wellbeing of professionals more front and centre will help ensure that the support our colleagues provide remains safe, effective and in line with their professional standards.</p> <p>We must tap into external resources (both general and profession specific) in order to join forces and improve the situation for all. Our absence data suggests that the 2nd most common reason for colleagues working in Adult Services to be absent from work is down to psychological reasons (caused both in and outside of the workplace).</p> <p>We have a responsibility to keep colleagues well and performing at their best if we are going to continue to provide the services to residents of Swindon.</p>

Bringing the vision to life

Through conversations with colleagues, analysing data and understanding our local and national context in terms of challenges facing us, we have developed a three year action plan which will set out our priority workforce deliverables over that period.

More detail can be located in the aforementioned action plan, however, our priority outcomes for workforce have been developed as follows, which complement our corporate people strategy:

Theme 1: Learning Organisation

“We are continuously learning, investing time to support our own and others development”

This is about:

- Getting some of the basics right
- Developing our own talent
- Being data led
- Having clear outcomes and goals
- Equity & Inclusion

Theme 2: Improving Performance

“We are continuously improving, supporting each other to be even better”

This is about:

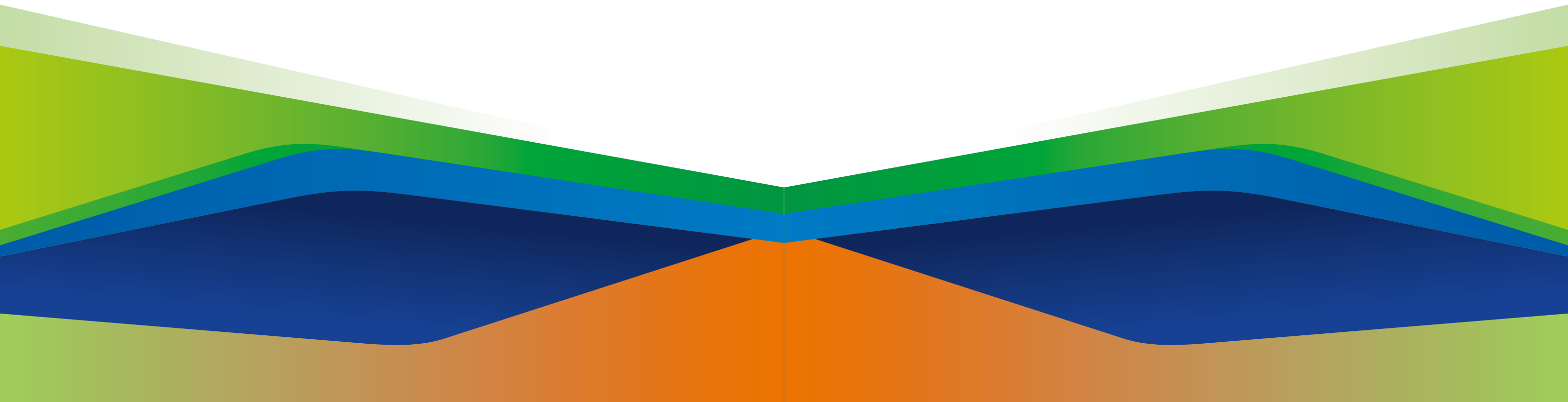
- Equity & Inclusion
- High performing teams
- Workforce planning

Theme 3: Employee Experience

“We are continuously listening, never losing sight of the colleague experience”

This is about:

- Colleague voice
- Embracing wellbeing
- Equity & Inclusion
- Recognising performance



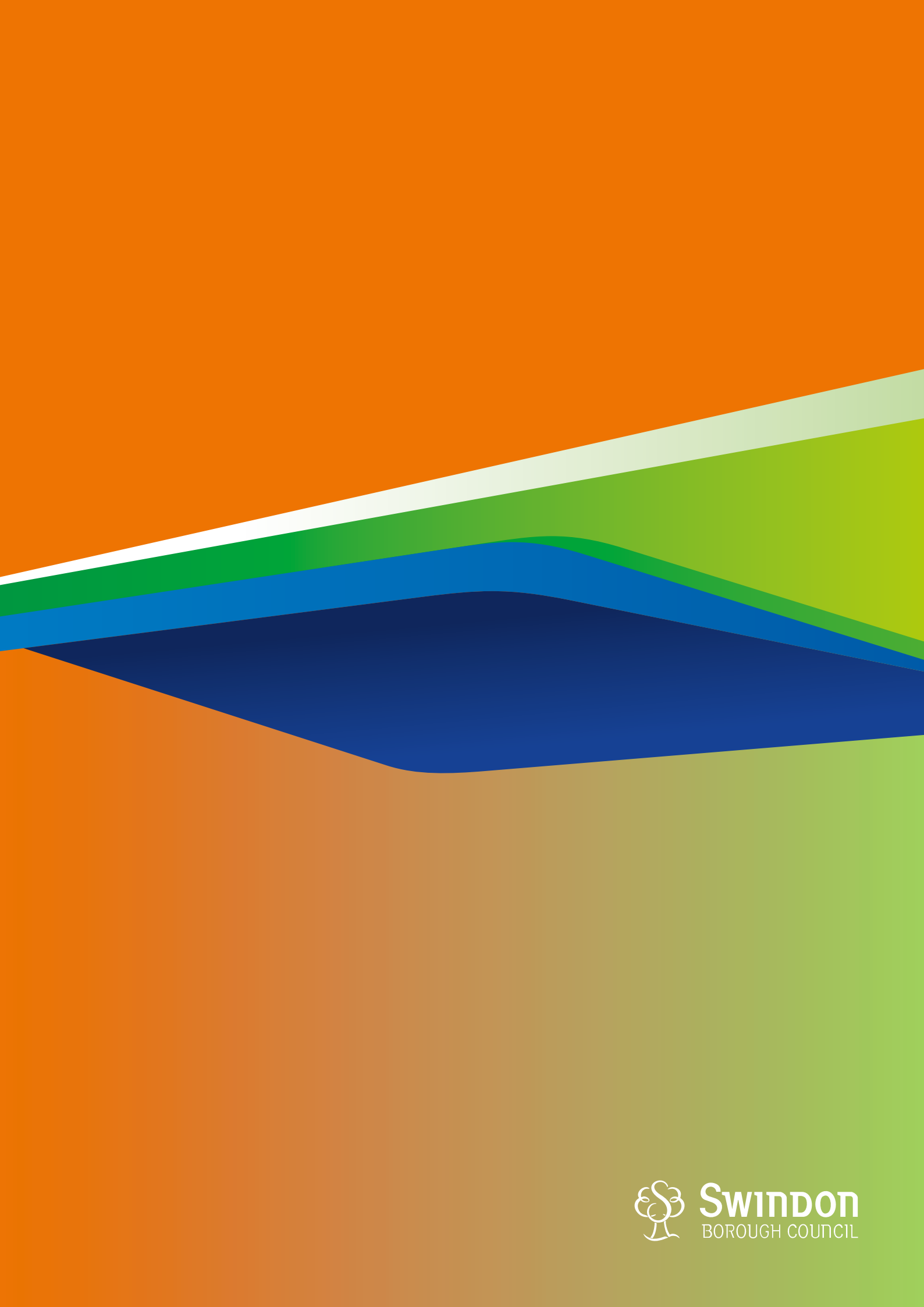
There is a three year action plan which provides granular detail on our priority deliverables over that period. However, the world of work is changing and we will need to be able to continue to adapt and explore new opportunities.

We will therefore review the action plan at the end of each year to make sure that these guiding deliverables are still relevant to where we are heading and will add the value we are looking for.

Between the annual review to ensure momentum and appropriate governance of actions being taken we will commit to the following:

1. Monthly workforce development group – accountable leads to meet to track and monitor progress of deliverables and flag any risks and issues as appropriate
2. Quarterly Business Review meeting – this is a quarterly meeting with Adults Senior Leadership Team. Quarterly reporting on progress, risks and issues will be reported in this forum.





SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL