

PHAR 2024-25 Recommendation Updates

Recommendation updates

This document provides an update on the recommendations in the [2024-25 Public Health Annual Report](#)

3.5 Children and young people – Strengthen early support for young people's transition.

Children and young people recommendation Strengthen early support for young people's transitions It is recommended that the Children's Prevention Board explores skills provision and facilitates greater collaboration between partners to deliver early, targeted support for children and young people to improve young people's preparedness for further education, employment, or training, and to reduce long-term inequalities in employment outcomes. For example, enhanced access to high-quality careers advice, improved provision of speech and language services, and increased opportunities to develop soft skills.

Update

Partners across Bolton, including Family Hubs, Early Years Communication and Language Service (EYCLDS), schools and early years settings, have continued to work collaboratively to support children's communication, school readiness and physical development. Speech and language support has been strengthened through EYCLDS, while Chat, Play, Read, Summer Raising Early Achievement in Literacy (REAL) and physical literacy initiatives have provided additional opportunities for children to develop the communication, social and self-regulation skills that underpin readiness for education and future learning.

There has been significant progress in strengthening the employment and skills system through the establishment of Communities of Practice, a Skills Executive Board, and a multi-agency Employment Hub, focused on improving connections between education, employers, careers support, and workforce development. Grant funding from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has been secured for 2026/27, supporting activity across engagement, pathways to employment, and sustained progression, particularly for those who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), economically inactive, or facing work and health barriers. Ongoing initiatives such as digital skills, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision, and employment support delivered through Libraries continue to help residents access opportunities and overcome barriers.

Next steps include working with GMCA to shape the future employment and skills support model, establishing an internal council working group on transitions and skills, and exploring a Greater Manchester-wide NEET taskforce, although reliance on short-term funding remains a key risk until longer-term arrangements are confirmed.

4.1.3 Preparing for work – Further establish integrate work, health and skills support.

The Live Well Oversight Group and the Team Bolton Network should strengthen the integration of employment, health, and skills services, ensuring that residents, particularly those who are economically inactive, are supported through coordinated, person-centred approaches. Leveraging the Greater Manchester Live Well programme and the MEAM (Making Every Adult Matter) framework, partners should test innovative models of support, improve engagement, and reduce barriers to sustainable employment.

Update

Significant progress has been made establishing a council-wide Live Well Board and Steering Group, with a focus on Work and Skills. Strong collaboration between Economic Development and Public Health has supported the successful delivery of Year 1 of the Economic Trailblazer, achieving positive outcomes in project co-design, innovation, engagement, skills progression and employment, alongside securing Local Authority Grant funding for 2026/27 to continue and expand this work.

WorkWell activity has now been integrated into the 2026/27 Local Authority Grant programme, ensuring continued support for residents whose health issues place them at risk of leaving employment. Year 2 of the Trailblazer is strengthening the integration of work, health and skills support through targeted provision, data-informed delivery, community engagement and alignment with employer needs identified through the Local Skills Improvement Plan. Individual Placement Support (IPS) employment service is now embedded in the recently commissioned Bolton drug and alcohol service provided by Better Days Bolton.

Next steps focus on delivering the 2026/27 programme, further integrating work, health and skills services, embedding data-led approaches, and applying learning from the Trailblazer to support system change and more seamless resident journeys. Short-term funding remains a risk, although the Integrated Settlement presents an opportunity to establish longer-term approaches and outcomes.

4.2.3 Staying well in work – promote workplace wellbeing.

It is recommended that the Team Bolton Network encourages a broader coalition of local employers to embed robust workplace wellbeing practices. Key actions may include offering flexible working arrangements, fostering inclusive workplace cultures, and improving access to staff health and professional development opportunities.

Update

Bolton has continued to strengthen its focus on workplace wellbeing through employer engagement, health promotion initiatives, and the integration of wellbeing into local employment, skills and business support programmes. The relaunch of Team Bolton as the Bolton Skills Executive Board, with senior representation from Public Health, Children's Services and Place, has reinforced the strategic link between skills, economic growth, inclusion and workforce wellbeing.

Employers across the borough have been supported to improve workplace health through initiatives such as the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter, workplace wellbeing workshops, mental health awareness campaigns, and targeted support for Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs). Evidence and local feedback indicate growing recognition of wellbeing as a business priority, with increasing uptake of good employment practices and stronger links being made between workforce health, productivity and business resilience.

While progress is positive, adoption of workplace wellbeing measures remains variable across sectors and business sizes. Next steps will focus on increasing employer participation, strengthening connections between wellbeing and good employment standards, and targeting support to sectors facing higher levels of workforce ill health, while addressing challenges such as financial pressures, workforce shortages and limited capacity within smaller organisations.

4.3.2 Supporting the most vulnerable – Develop inclusive employment for residents with additional needs.

The Live Well Strategic Oversight Group should lead the development of a sustainable employment support model, drawing on effective approaches such as Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and include consideration of Bolton employment support team. This model should include strong employer engagement to co-create tailored job roles for individuals with additional support needs and a focus on long-term, strength-based employment outcomes that extend beyond time-limited funding.

Update

Bolton has continued to strengthen inclusive employment opportunities for residents with additional needs through improved partnership working with employers, education providers, support services and community organisations. Progress has included greater employer engagement on inclusive recruitment, expanded supported employment and work experience opportunities, and the use of social value approaches within commissioning and procurement to create pathways into work for underrepresented groups.

While employer awareness and support infrastructure have improved, employment outcomes for residents with disabilities, learning disabilities and neurodiverse conditions continue to lag behind the wider population. Future activity will focus on scaling supported employment, improving transitions from education into work, embedding the Live Well Journey to Employment, and using devolved work and skills funding to support locally designed, inclusive employment initiatives.

The Economic Growth and Resilience Plan, alongside wider work and skills programmes, will continue to encourage employers to adopt inclusive recruitment practices and create meaningful opportunities that inspire aspiration and remove barriers to work. Key risks include short-term funding arrangements, economic pressures on employers, limited access to tailored support and job coaching.

5.3 Older people – Strengthen the Age Friendly employment landscape.

It is recommended that all of Bolton's Anchor Institutions sign the Age Friendly Employers Pledge and commit to implementing at least one measurable action annually to support the recruitment, retention, or development of workers aged 50 and over. Bolton's Age Friendly Partnership is ideally placed to facilitate sharing of progress and good practice, contributing to a multigenerational and inclusive local workforce that values the contribution of older adults and supports healthy ageing through employment.

Update

Progress has been made against this recommendation over the past year, with key partners taking forward the Age Friendly Employers Pledge. Age UK Bolton are actively involved in supporting and promoting the pledge locally, helping to raise awareness and share good practice. Bolton Council has now signed up to the pledge and is working towards delivering measurable actions to support the recruitment, retention and development of workers aged 50 and over. The current position is encouraging with increasing commitment from employers in Bolton to become Age Friendly employers. Continuing to build on this momentum as part of Bolton's wider Age Friendly Strategy, we will continue to encourage anchor institutions and other local organisations to sign up and commit to becoming age Friendly Employers, strengthening a more inclusive and multigenerational employment landscape across the borough, bringing valuable skills and experience to the workforce.