

### **Appendix 3: Relevant policies and strategies that support the work and health agenda**

- In 2023 the previous government announced a new 'Back to Work Plan' which included boosting four key programmes: NHS Talking Therapies, Individual Placement and Support, Restart and Universal Support, alongside the WorkWell funding.
- Following the change of government in July, economic growth has been the primary focus, with an emphasis on empowering local areas to tackle economic inactivity, with an ambition for an employment rate of 80% (extra 2 million people in work nationally).
- As announced in the King's Speech, the government plans to introduce the Skills England Bill and the Employment Rights Bill (published 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024) as part of a coordinated approach to align national work and health policies with broader economic objectives. These bills look to establish 'Skills England', end zero-hour contracts and make flexible working the default from day one.
- The government is also expected to publish a White Paper on the 'Plan to Get Britain Working' in the autumn, which is set to include manifesto commitments and policy announcements made since the election, for example:
  - Devolve funding so local areas can shape a joined-up work, health, and skills offer.
  - Bring Jobcentre Plus and National Careers Service together to provide a national jobs and careers service.
  - New work, health and skills plans for 'economically inactive' people who are not looking for work or available to work.
- Locally, the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Strategy and the Kent and Medway Economic Framework both recognise the strong connection between economic prosperity and the health and wellbeing of the population.
- Many other organisations across Kent and Medway have also developed local strategies that align with this shared vision of health and work and creating a healthy workforce. A few examples include:
  - Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Priority Theme 1, 2 and 4)
  - Kent and Medway Local Skills Improvement Plan (to address sector-specific skills needs and shortages)
  - People/Workforce Strategies (KCC, Medway, ICB etc)
  - Health and Care Partnership Action Plans (Vision to support broader social and economic development)
  - Education (The Education People and Kent Further Education)
  - Skills and Employability Plan for Medway (Establishing Routes to Employment)