

**COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP  
2 AUGUST 2022**

**MID DEVON AS A TRAUMA INFORMED COUNCIL**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Dennis Knowles  
**Responsible Officer:** Simon Newcombe, Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing

**Reason for Report and Recommendation:** To provide a more detailed report to members about Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) becoming a Trauma Informed Council, with a trained trauma aware workforce, as requested by the Community Policy Development Group (PDG) held on 22 March 2022. This follows a recommendation of the PDG Working Group on Community Safety made at the meeting that the PDG investigate adopting this informal status and strategic approach as a Council.

**Recommendations:**

- 1. That Cabinet recommend to Full Council the degree of investment the Council would be required make towards becoming a Trauma Informed (TI) Council.**
- 2. Subject to Recommendation 1, that Cabinet recommend to Full Council a stepped approach is adopted, as set out in Annex 1**

**Financial Implications:** See Annex 1 – Trauma Informed Stepped Approach. This outlines some delivery costs (relating to training) over a two year period that would see the Council moving towards becoming a TI Council, as summarised below.

- Year 1 – estimated training costs (if using external training providers) - £9,000
- Year 2 – estimated training costs (if using external training providers) - £3,000  
Option to train in-house trainers - £2,700 per person (x 3 = £8100)
- Year 3 onwards – estimated refresher training costs – £0 – if using ‘in-house’ trainers or free e-learning packages

The associated costs for staff time to attend training is not included. There will also be cost implications for key staff to lead on this work, coordinate and manage a delivery plan and arrange consultation sessions etc. (as outlined within Annex 1).

**Budget and Policy Framework:** There are on-going budget implications with regard to adaptations to the TI approach for frontline services, plus a need to incorporate TI within policies and working practices.

**Legal Implications:** None directly arising from this report.

**Risk Assessment:** There is a risk that if this approach is not approved that MDDC services do not suitably and satisfactorily accommodate the needs of our service users.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** To become Trauma Informed (TI) across the Council would require detailed analysis of our service provision to ensure that all customer interactions are mindful of the needs of our customers. Each service area would be required to consider service provision and complete a revised EIA for any revision to policy and processes.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** Adoption of a TI approach meets with the desire to be a progressive Council that is committed to providing a high quality and sustainable service. This modification to a TI service delivery links closely with the promise for local engagement and participation, supporting good health (because of improved understanding of barriers), promotes equality of service, and supports the values that are important to the Council. More information is provided in Section 2.0.

**Impact on Climate Change:** None directly arising from the report.

## 1.0 Introduction/Background

- 1.1 As requested by Members this report outlines the following points before providing a stepped approach option to becoming a Trauma Informed Council detailed in Annex 1.
- 1.2 Evidence is growing that demonstrates that large numbers of people in contact with public services have experienced traumatic events (Greenwald, et al., 2012). Equally, evidence is emerging that people who work in human services have a high prevalence of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) scores themselves (Esaki & Larkin, 2013).
- 1.3 For MDDC to transition into a TI Council it means prioritising the building of trusting, mutual relationships above all else.

## 2.0 How becoming Trauma Informed links to the Corporate Plan and Priorities

- 2.1 How becoming TI provides a wider synergy with the Council's Corporate Plan and Priorities are linked below:

### Homes

- 'Support and grown active tenancy engagement' to ensure inclusivity of the most vulnerable within our tenants and communities.

### Community

- ‘Promote new/more integrated approaches to promoting good health and healthier living, especially in the context of planned new developments’.
- ‘Seek opportunities to address public health issues and disparities to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in Mid Devon’.
- ‘Promote community involvement in Council activity’

2.2 Adoption of a TI approach meets with the desire to be a progressive Council that is committed to providing a high quality and sustainable service. This modification to a TI service delivery links closely with the promise for local engagement and participation, supporting good health (because of improved understanding of barriers), promotes equality of service, and supports the values that are important to the Council.

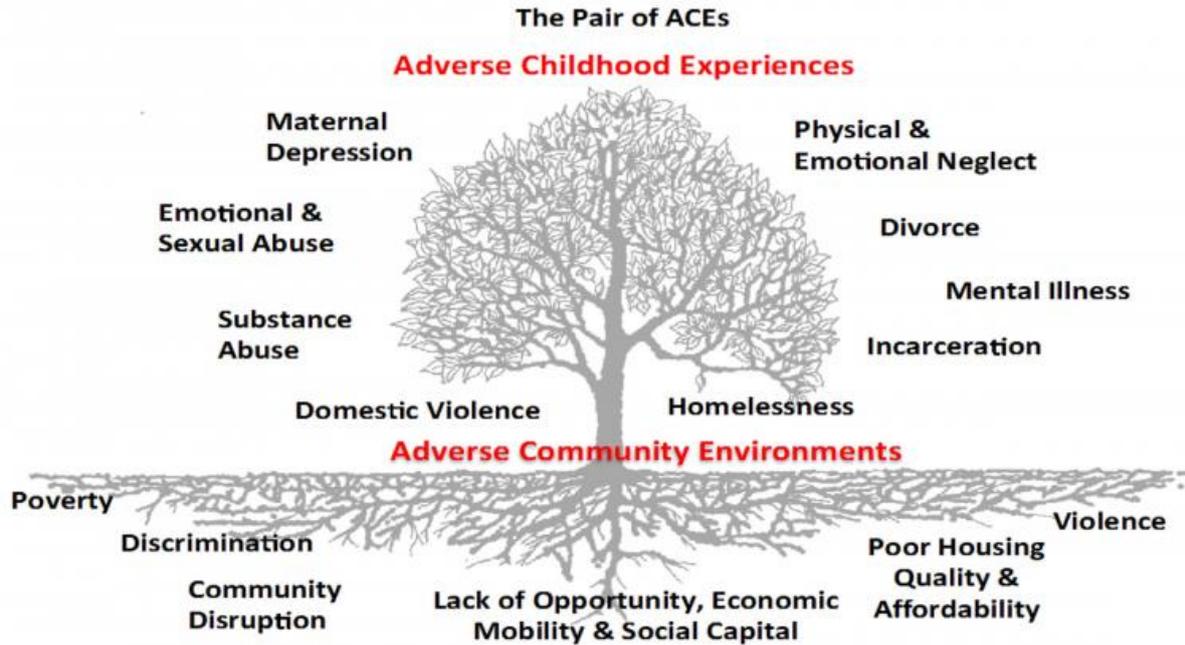
### 3.0 **Why becoming TI is important**

3.1 The East & Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) have recognised and prioritised trauma awareness within current work-streams. This links with many areas of work where trauma may play a part in activities that cause concern for many partner agencies. This includes sexual violence, domestic violence and abuse, modern slavery and human trafficking, drugs and alcohol abuse, and youth vulnerability and exploitation.

3.2 Experience of traumatic events in childhood (ACEs) is known to have lasting impact and most likely changes in the brains wiring as the individuals struggle to deal with what they have experienced. They may experience difficulty feeling safe within their personal life, and experience barriers to feeling safe or developing trusting in their relationships with service providers. We need to change our thinking from “*what is wrong with you?*” to “*what has happened to you?*”

3.3 For those perpetrating dangerous, abusive and traumatic experiences on individuals (including family members) there is strong likelihood that they may have had traumatic experiences relating to these areas in their own personal history.

3.4 The image below, entitled ‘A Pair of ACEs’, depicts the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (Ellis and Dietz 2017). It firmly links to the issues of homelessness, suitable and affordable housing, and opportunities of social and economic mobility, poverty, violence and discrimination. All of which fit within our Corporate Plan and Priorities.



3.5 The Scottish Government has recognised the important impact of trauma and has developed a National Trauma Training Programme with Online Resources to support organisations make a transition to becoming TI.

3.6 The link to the following 8-minute Video called *Opening Doors: Trauma Informed Practice for the Workforce* (<https://vimeo.com/274703693>) provides a good introduction to trauma and trauma-informed practice. It was created by NHS Education for Scotland and aims to support practitioners to understand how to adapt the way they work to make a difference to people affected by trauma and adversity.

#### 4.0 **The benefits to Mid Devon and our community**

4.1 The potential benefits of a trauma informed organisation are:

- the individual and communities that we serve will feel that they are being listened to
- positive relationships will be formed and the Council/individuals are trusted
- people feel safe and supported
- problems or issues can be addressed before they escalate
- trauma cycles within families are reduced
- neighbourhood disputes and anti-social behaviour are reduced
- reduced tenancy breaches
- barriers to support services are minimalised
- the workforce is trauma informed and aware of the role of ACEs
- we support a preventative approach
- the organisation culture changes and adapts to being trauma informed
- leadership is based upon kind relationships that are safe and collaborative acknowledgement

## 5.0 Suggested Delivery Plan for TI at Mid Devon District Council

5.1 Annex 1 contains further detail regarding the delivery plan and timetable for a stepped approach to adopting an organisational shift to becoming a Trauma Informed Council.

## 6.0 Recommendations

6.1 The first recommendation for the PDG is that Cabinet recommend to Full Council the degree of investment the Council would be required make towards becoming a TI Council.

6.2 Subject to the first recommendation, the second recommendation is that Cabinet recommend to Full Council that a stepped approach is adopted as outlined in Annex 1 to become the first Trauma Informed Council in Devon.

**Contact for more Information:** Simon Newcombe, Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing [snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk) or Julia Ryder, Specialist Lead - Community Safety & Emergency Planning [jryder@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:jryder@middevon.gov.uk)

### Circulation of the Report:

Cabinet Member for Community Well Being (Cllr Dennis Knowles)  
Members of the Community Policy Development Group  
All Leadership Team  
All Corporate Management Team  
All Operations Managers  
Legal Services

### Links to Policies

Corporate ASB and Housing ASB Policies  
Housing Strategy for Mid Devon 2021-25  
Safeguarding Policy  
MDDC Equality Scheme (in progress) and include Equality Impacts

### References and further information

Ellis, W., Dietz W. (2017). A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. Academic Pediatrics. 17, 86-99

Esaki, N., & Larkin, H. (2013). Prevalence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) among child service providers. Families in Society, 94(1), 31-37.

Greenwald, R., et al. (2012). Implementing trauma-informed treatment for youth in a residential facility: first-year outcomes. Residential Treatment for Children and Youth, 29(2), 141-53

Scottish Government tool-kit

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/trauma-informed-practice-toolkit-scotland/>

Plymouth City Council 2019 Cabinet paper

<https://democracy.plymouth.gov.uk/documents/s96851/2019%2006%2011%20-%20Trauma%20informed%20city%20cover%20sheet.pdf>

Plymouth Trauma Informed Network – Plymouth City Council Health & Wellbeing board paper 2021

<https://democracy.plymouth.gov.uk/documents/s108910/Trauma%20Informed%20Plymouth%20Update%20for%20HWB%20board%20002.pdf>

## Annex 1

### Mid Devon District Council Trauma Informed Stepped Approach

#### Step One – Becoming Trauma Aware

##### **Establish a TI Delivery Group**

This group will look to deliver this commitment of the Council in a timely manner and arrange for consultation with all MDDC service areas, and most importantly our Service Users.

- Terms of Reference to be agreed but recommended that this Delivery Group is led by a member of Corporate Management Team.
- Agree the methodology for delivering a TI Council
- Action Plan to be developed to consult with each service area, service users and partners.
- Ensuring staff and members are supported where discussions could be triggering
- Promotion of local support and services for signposting, linking to Safeguarding

##### **Associated Costs – resourcing staff time**

Step 1 Training			
Training Requirement	Services or Staff	Timeframe	Estimated Costs
General TI Awareness (Refresh every 2 years)	All Staff All Members	Within 6 months	Free e-learning
<b>Broader Awareness</b> Including links to ACEs  One off	Service Consultation Group CMT Safeguarding Leads MSHT First Responders TI Delivery Group members	Within 6 months	Est £3000 if using external training providers  Free e-learning, or In-house options available

#### Step Two – Becoming Trauma Sensitive

##### **TI Delivery Group Activities**

- Results of consultation with Service Areas and Customers will assist in identifying the areas where further TI development can lead to improved service delivery and improved customer service.
- Recommend appropriate policy change and integration of some concepts of trauma informed approach to operational ethos.
- Continuous reflective overview
- Ensuring staff and members are supported where discussions could be triggering

## Associated Costs – resourcing staff time

Step 2			
Training Requirement	Services or Staff	Timeframe	Estimated Costs
<b>Frontline Practitioner Training</b> (suggested list at this point)	Revs & Bens x 29 Housing x 29 Customer First x 21 Public Health x 24 Total (estimate) 96	Within 12 months	½ day training with external providers Est £6000 total  Free e-learning, or In-house options available
<b>Frontline Practitioner Training on-going</b> & for additional service areas identified	Estimated 50 staff	Within 18 months	½ day training Est £3000 total with external providers  Free e-learning, or In-house options available
Refresh Training every 2 years	Estimated 150 staff	Within 24 months	2 hrs Free e-learning, or In-house options available
<b>Trauma Informed Educators</b> ( <i>optional</i> but possibly more cost effective) i.e. Train Trainers in-house per service area	2-3 nominated staff  (Source Rockpool Training)	Within 6-24 months	£2,700 pp 3x days

## Step Three – Becoming Trauma Responsive

### TI Delivery Group Activities

- Continued consultation with service users and service areas
- Adaptation of working practices in consideration of trauma
- Implementation of policy change to incorporate trauma
- Continuous reflective overview
- Ensuring staff and members are supported where discussions could be triggering

### Associated Costs – resourcing staff time

Step 3 Training			
Training Requirement	Services or Staff	Timeframe	Estimated Costs
<b>Trauma Informed Educators</b> <i>(optional</i> but possibly more cost effective i.e. Train Trainers in-house per key service area)	2-3 nominated staff  (Source Rockpool Training)	Within 12 months	£2,700 pp 3x days With external providers

### Step Four – Trauma Informed

#### TI Delivery Group Activities

- Consideration of future format of group to link or merge with Corporate Safeguarding group
- Continue to promote the TI culture within the organisation, working practices and settings

### Associated Costs – resourcing staff time

Step 4 Training			
Training Requirement	Services or Staff	Timeframe	Estimated Costs
On-going refresher training or appropriate training for new staff	All service areas		Free e-learning, or In-house options available

### Resources

#### Local TI Training Providers providing services across the UK

- Zebra Collective, Plymouth
  - Trauma Informed Approaches
- Rock Pool, Torbay
  - ABC of Trauma Offers –
    - ½ day Awareness
    - 1 day Practitioner Training
    - 1 day Trauma Enhanced Training

Scottish Government – National Trauma Training Programme On-line Resources (FREE)