

CO-PRODUCTION COMMISSIONING

Tool Kit



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

SAFETY – TRUSTWORTHINESS – CHOICE – COLLABORATION – EMPOWERMENT (V1)

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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Changing Futures programme is a £77 million joint initiative by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and The National Lottery Community Fund for local organisations to work in partnership to better support those who experience multiple disadvantages.

Thank you to the Plymouth’s Changing Futures Team and Improving Lives Plymouth for their support with creating this Toolkit.

2. START WITH LISTENING

In early 2023, the Domestic Abuse (DA) Systems Leadership Group - as part of the preparation for the commissioning of the new Plymouth DA Service (PDAS) - held a Community Listening Event to share the themes that were previously gathered via extensive Appreciative Enquiry (AE) with victims, survivors and people who harm.

At this event, it was clear that the established themes continued to resonate and there was a passion in the city for people with lived and living experience to coproduce around the services they care about.

3. TOOLKIT: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Creating the conditions to thrive, grow and flourish

- To share the co-production commissioning learning, approaches and reflections gathered by

the Strategic Commissioning and Changing Futures including Peer Researchers.

- To inspire increased confidence to incorporate co-production and the voice of Lived Experience into commissioning processes to create more diverse, inclusive and trauma informed services.
- To see Lived Experience highlighted as an asset and promote using a strength-based lens to enable system change.

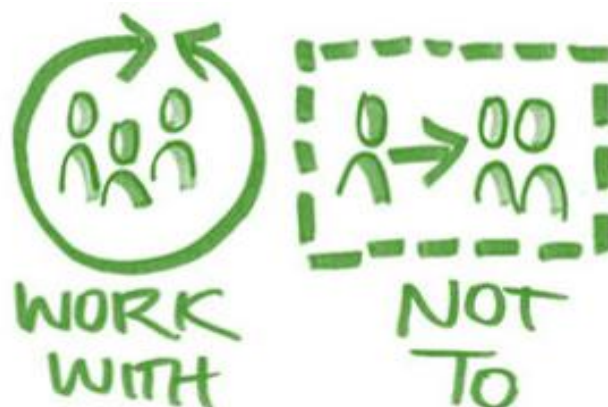
4. OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

“Trauma informed practice shouldn’t be a tick box exercise or an overused buzzword. Meaningful trauma informed practice requires a whole system paradigm shift. A cultural transformation at every level and in every sphere of a service / organisation.”

Dr Karen Treisman



Changing Futures and the work we have done as a programme (and how we have done it) aims to provide evidence-based approaches based on three main concepts concerned with trauma-informed practice, psychologically informed environments and co-production.



4.1 Psychologically Informed Environments

‘A Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) is a space where organisations and services understand needs of clients and staff in a thoughtful way and consider ‘the psychological make up – the thinking, emotions, personalities and past experience – of its participants in the way that it operates’ (Johnson et al., 2012 in *No One Left Out: Solutions Ltd, 2015*)’.

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The Changing Futures Programme is working in partnership with Dr Ray Middleton towards building a collective Psychologically Informed approach across the city, through providing learning opportunities and thinking spaces for professionals to come together. More information here: www.ladder4life.com

Understanding Personal Narratives from Training Programme [video](#).

Email: Ray.middleton@ladder4life.com

"If we want to reignite innovation and passion, we have to rehumanise work."

- Brene Brown

If you would like to be part of this ongoing development and movement towards kinder, more trauma-informed approaches, commissioning processes and workplaces please get in touch.

4.2 Co-production

Co-production is a way of working that offers an alternative to the traditional, hierarchical top-down flow of power. It involves sharing control with those using a service, and ensures they have equal influence over the design, delivery and commissioning of any service which affects them.

Co-production understands that those with lived experiences are going to be best placed to understand the issues and opportunities within an area of change. This ensures that proposed changes are person-centred throughout.

"Co-production refers to a way of working where service providers and users work together to reach a collective outcome. The approach is value-driven and built on the principle that those who are affected by a service are best placed to help design it."

- Involve

The six principles of co-production:

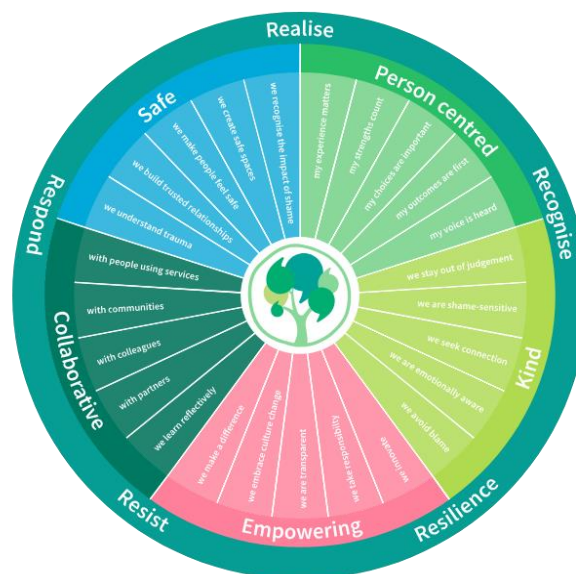
1. Recognising people as assets.
2. Building on people's capabilities.

3. Developing two-way, reciprocal relationships.
4. Encouraging peer support.
5. Blurring boundaries between delivering and receiving services.
6. Facilitating rather than delivering

4.3 Trauma-informed practice

Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) is a way of working that accounts for the impact that trauma may have had in people's lives. A key goal of TIP is to raise awareness among staff and services about the impact of trauma and potential shame responses, to prevent re-traumatisation of people in service settings that are meant to provide support, and to develop policies and practices that assist healing from trauma.

Encouraging values-based commissioning based on [Trauma Informed Plymouth Network's \(TIPN\) trauma lens](#): empowered, safe, collaborative, person-centred and kind.



The Changing Futures Plymouth programme embraces the co-produced vision and values created by the TIPN [here](#) and the key principles below that underlie TIP adapted from Fallot and Harris (Fallot & Harris, 2006). These principles have guided us at each stage of the process.

Utilising [Human Learning Systems \(HLS\)](#) approaches and enhancing capacity for co-production and for building on experience of using [AE](#), for example,

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around developing strategies relating to domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

Key principles

1. Safety

Efforts are made by both individuals and organisations to support and hold carefully the physical and emotional safety of people. This includes reasonable freedom from threat or harm and attempts to prevent further re-traumatisation.

2. Trustworthiness

Transparency exists at all levels, in an organisation's policies and procedures, with the objective of building trust.

3. Choice

People have meaningful choice and a voice in the decision-making process of the organisation and its services.

4. Collaboration

The organisation recognises the value of staff and clients' experience in overcoming challenges and improving the system as a whole. This can be seen in the formal or informal use of peer support and mutual self-help.

5. Empowerment

Efforts are made by the organisation to share power and give people a strong voice in decision-making, at both individual and organisational levels.

4.4 Application of learning from the Changing Futures Peer Researchers recruitment process...

Independent Evaluation and Learning

Changing Futures Peer Researchers Programme captured case studies, triangulated feedback on emergent themes and independently evaluated

approaches at each stage with the Changing Futures Evaluator, Tina Wilkinson.

This has all helped create a rich source of learning the key transferable points of which are:

Relationships matter

Relationships can be a source of trauma and a solution; strong relationships built on inclusivity, collaboration, and teamwork help build resilience and improve experiences and outcomes. Even when

conflict arises or things don't go to plan focusing on the relationship allows us to learn, repair, heal and move forward together.

Get started and make mistakes

There is no blueprint for working towards a trauma-informed approach. Instead, and in the words of Karen Treisman, we should see ourselves as innovators for change, 'hopeful disruptors.'

This requires the courage to question the way we do things and do things differently, make mistakes and learn from them.

Culture is key

Engaging people with experience of Multiple Disadvantage (MDA) works to scaffold an organisation's commitment to both TIP approaches and co-production principles.

The involvement of people with Lived Experience of MDA has been a key component of the Changing Futures Programme along with the ambition to reinforce a compassionate and more trauma informed workforce across the city; we believe that changing the culture from within has to include the workforce, both existing and new.

5. COPRODUCTION AND COMMISSIONING

The coproduction should be proportionate to size of procurement. The Level of Co-production table below is based on Contract Standing Orders (July 2024) based on current [Procurement Regulations](#).

	Up to £50,000	£50,000 up to £200,000	£200,000 up to £500,000	£500,000 - £3,000,000	Over £3,000,000 or Key Decision
Level of Co-Production	Review relevant findings from local and national engagement activities and research to identify themes to shape the service specification				
		Review relevant findings from local and national engagement activities and research to identify themes to shape the business case			
		Co-produce at least one method statement question with people who have relevant lived experience, where possible, or those who represent people with relevant lived experience			
		Co-produce Service Specification with key stakeholders including people who have relevant lived experience			
		Carry out Appreciative Enquiry Interviews to shape the commissioning intentions			
	Co-produce EIA with key stakeholders including people who have relevant lived experience				
	Co-produce CIA with key stakeholders including people who have relevant lived experience				

Procurement is defined as the whole process of acquiring goods, services and works from suppliers. It starts with identifying needs and ends with the disposal of a used asset or the end of a contract (source: Procurement Staffroom).

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6. Independent peer evaluation
7. Survey for residents / clients to be coproduced with them
8. Request providers complete the Young Safe guardians 10 wishes self-audit and sign up to the 10 Wishes Charter
9. Learning Walks carried out by Young Safe guardians or Service Users to gain their views for service improvement
10. Peer Research Networks
11. Trusted Organisations e.g. Voices at the DAC
12. Listening spaces/hubs e.g. NIHR Chatty Cafes
13. Ongoing reflection

5.1 Reflection Point

Consider adopting a more flexible approach based on the guiding principles of both TIP and Coproduction to shape all stages of the commissioning life cycle.

Making these adjustments common practice throughout the cycle and ongoing contract management rather than a specific engagement activity at a particular point benefits the system as a whole to build authentic, resilient services and a learning culture to support improvements.

Encouraging commissioners to attend trauma informed practice, co-production and AE training at the earliest part of their induction to build the culture change across the Council.

Ask what people with lived experience would like to be involved in, e.g. writing method statements or attending market events, and what they would prefer to engage e.g. in person or online, in a group or 1-2-1.

“Effective co-production is grounded in the principles of accessibility, diversity, equality and reciprocity (getting something back for putting something in). Co-production can help to challenge the idea that people with lived experience – traditionally people who have used services – can’t participate on an equal level with people in professional roles. It can be an extremely effective way for people with lived experience to be able to influence change.”

- Co-production | Influence and Participation Toolkit – Mind

Consider how the co-production can engage with people from marginalised communities who may not have English as a first language.

6. THE START, NOT THE END...

We hope this toolkit and the shared learning within it has started meaningful conversations around how to co-produce our commissioned services and ensure that the voice of lived experience is embedded into commissioning and contract management practices.

The Changing Futures Showcase Event in July 2024 featured the development of Coproduction Commissioning Toolkit in their Resource Pack.



Through the Changing Futures Lived Experience Community of Practice, we are learning about what had worked well and what could be better and incorporated into a commissioning toolkit as part of Changing Future’s legacy.

The toolkit will be made available on the Plymouth City Council staffroom so that it can be used beyond Strategic Commissioning.

The ‘Starter Training’ will be part of induction training for those undertaking commissioning activities with the intention to develop more comprehensive options in the future.

Strategic Cooperative Commissioning will review the toolkit on an annual basis to update with practice, strategies, policies, guidance and legislation and provide case studies of how the toolkit has been used in practice.

If you would like further information or to be part of this emerging work please do get in touch with **Strategic Co-operative Commissioning**.

Email: jointcommissioning@plymouth.gov.uk

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7. RESOURCES

7.1 Local Co-Production Resources

- Co-Production Commissioning – Starter Level Training
- Changing Futures Showcase Event - Changing Futures Plymouth Resource Pack
- Community Empowerment Guide & Engagement Strategy (being developed)
- SEND Co-Production & Participation Framework
- Changing Futures Lived Experience Remuneration Policy
- Belong in Plymouth - [Community Conversations & Map of Belonging](#)
- Early Help Community Empowerment Stonehouse Collective

7.2 National Co-Production Resources

- [SCIE What is Co-production?](#)
- [SCIE Co-production: what it is and how to do it](#)
- [SCIE co-production charter](#)
- [SCIE Commissioning for outcomes](#)
- [SCIE Co-Production. The Care Act and the Wellbeing Principle](#)
- [SCIE Paying people who receive benefits: Co-production and involvement](#)
- [SCIE Examples of co-production in social care](#)
- [Co-Production Collective - Commissioning for outcomes and co-production](#)
- [MEAM: Getting started with co-production](#)
- [Stronger Together A co-production toolkit from Ageing Better](#)
- [TLAP Co-Production Resources](#)
- [Buckinghamshire SEND Co-Production Toolkit](#)
- [A Movement for Gloriously Ordinary Lives - Social Care Future](#)
- [Rewilding social care – Rewriting social care](#)

7.3 Trauma Informed Approaches

- [TIPN Vision & Values](#)
- [Scotland Trauma-informed practice: toolkit](#)

7.4 Compassionate Leadership and Training

- [The Kings Fund - An introduction to leading with kindness and compassion in health & social care](#)
- [Shame Competence Training](#)
- [Developing Brave Leaders and Courageous Cultures](#)
- Dr Ray Middleton Episode 1 [Understanding Personal Narratives from Training Programme](#)

7.5 Evaluation

- [Community Fund - Involving people with lived experience in the workforce](#)
- Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Changing Futures

7.6 Plain English / Glossary

- PCC Plain English and Writing Style
- [TLAP Care and Support Jargon Buster](#)
- [TLAP Glossary - Co-production in commissioning](#)

8. Useful Contacts

8.1 Children & Young People

- [PCC The Voices of Children & Young People](#)
- [Young Safeguarders - Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
- [PCC Plymouth Youth Cabinet](#)
- [UHP NHS Trust Youth Patient Council](#)
- [PIAS Youth Ascends](#)

8.2 Health & Social Care

- [Healthwatch Plymouth](#) is the independent consumer champion for people using local health and social care services in Plymouth.

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- [Devon Engagement Service](#) - Living Options Devon (LOD) Gateway Request Form to be used to spot purchase engagement activities. Contact LOD for initial queries or to send the completed request form via email to: Leila.Manion@livingoptions.org

8.3 Housing

Supporting Accommodation Review Team (SART) Standards – In development carrying out reviews and incorporating residents views. Email: SART@plymouth.gov.uk.

8.4 Community

- What Community Builders do and how to contact a [Community Builder](#)
- ONCALL Interpreters and Translators

9. Case Studies

9.1 Family Hubs:

- [Family Hubs Case Study on HLS](#)
- National Centre for Family Hubs newsletter: [Visit to Plymouth Family Hub](#) – recognising a trauma informed approach
- AE at Family Hubs Launches - Barnardo's Report
- Mystery Shoppers (in development):
 1. Parents recruited through the "Parent and Carer Panel" (see PCP Helping Hands Strategy) and through a Social Media Campaign.
 2. Parents who wish to participate choose which Family Hub to attend at a time convenient for them. With the intention of a different Parent visiting each site (12 sites).
 3. Community Builder supports the Parents in a group (or individually) to prepare for the visit by talking through the Mystery Shoppers Report Card.
 4. Parents complete the mystery shopper [survey](#) Report Card online after their visit.

5. Community Builder analyses the responses and feeds back to Family Hubs contract manager in PCC Strategic Commissioning.
6. Contract manager feeds back any actions to the Parent and Carer Panel via Community Builder to show the difference their visit made to service improvement.

9.2 Resettlement Support Service for Refugees commissioned using Assurance Process

- This commissioning process was underpinned by co-production and design values, working with providers and a panel of people with lived experience of being refugees.
- An initial series of market engagement co-design workshops with providers took place at which were laid out the background and high-level service outcomes and at which providers were invited to refine and to help define the activities required to deliver outcomes, based on a theory of change framework.
- A two-stage tender process with the aim of securing a partnership of providers to deliver service took place.
- Following the first stage of the tender, having only one emerging partnership allowed us to proceed with an 'assurance process' involving dialogue and discussion and a much more collaborative approach to developing service design.
- During a series of dialogue and assurance meetings the partnership was required to set out their plans for service delivery against a set of published criteria.
- Eventually the stage was reached by which the evaluators and partnership were satisfied with an agreed offer that met the required standard to be able to award a contract.
- Involving people with lived experience was an integral part of this process.
- An expression of interest was issued to 'recruit' interested parties that was shared by colleagues at the university who have an existing co-production group.
- Two people with lived experience responded, their involvement has been invaluable in helping to shape method statement questions and

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evaluation criteria, and they have been involved in the evaluation and present at all the assurance meetings.

- The Changing Futures Team supported the coproduction element of the commissioning.
- The experience revealed complexities around remuneration of people with lived experience engaging in coproduction, specifically how to remunerate people appropriately without disrupting their welfare benefits.
- Designated support for coproduction outside of the commissioning team, was very helpful.
- The Changing Futures team member involved reflected specifically on the need to be involved with clear understanding of the power dynamics from the beginning for coproduction.
- For all coproduction in commissioning there is a need for language to be accessible.
- This is even more critical when you are working with people for whom English is not their first language.

9.3 Young Carers Support Service

- Community Youth Team (CYT) coproduced a method statement question with a young carer.
- CYT carried out AE with young carers and the people they care for with the key themes incorporated into the service specification.

9.4 Carers Strategy Development

- [Plymouth All Age Carers Strategy](#)
- Carers and young carers engaged through surveys and group sessions to understand their views.
- Themes used to develop strategic priorities
- Priorities taken back to carers and young carers groups to discuss and shape changes

9.5 DA Commissioning

- Journey Mapping for DA (costed) to support system thinking
- DA Learning Through Listening Timeline

- DA NA being coproduced with peer researcher
- Embed peer research - One of our peer research team interest in Violence Against Women and Girls, codesigned and delivered a presentation for the national DA Commissioner's conference in Manchester – and has since had an ongoing role in the strategic development of the DA commissioning.
- Test and learn for the current commissioning processes e.g. Psychologically Informed Environments method to the process of preparation, delivery and aftercare. Training considerations for peer researchers in the commissioning process.
- Inviting Peer Researchers to the in-person Market Events with providers to ensure that they hear from the market, opportunities to contribute to the discussions and provide feedback from their perspective. Lessons to be learnt from this involvement were: preparation beforehand to ensure clarity of their role at these events, regular check ins during events and debrief following each session to make improvements for the next session.
- Attendance at online Market Warming session, positive feedback included acknowledgement of challenges and value of workforce, honest and open message, willingness to adapt to feedback, leaving adequate time for questions and discussion and the option to do this after the event via the portal.
- Sharing of EOIs to co-produce the procurement process including method statement questions.

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