

Trauma Informed Recovery Elected Members Briefing

Summary and Recommendations

As agreed by Leaders in September, the COSLA President and Deputy First Minister have written to all Council Chief Executives and local partners seeking support for our shared ambition to work collectively to ensure a trauma-informed approach to recovery is taken across Scotland.

The aim of this work is to ensure we deliver services in ways which prevent further harm or re-traumatisation for those who have experienced psychological trauma or adversity at any stage in their lives. One of the key asks is to identify local champions to help influence change. To support this and provide a wider understanding of a trauma informed approach, an elected members' briefing has been developed.

This paper seeks Leaders commitment to support awareness raising and understanding across all elected members in Scotland as part of achieving our goal .

This paper invites Leaders to:

- i. Provide reflection and comment on the briefing and identify what further support could be provided to elected members both locally and nationally; and,
- ii. Commit to sharing the briefing locally and encouraging elected members to help achieve the ambition of a trauma-informed approach to recovery.

References

Trauma Informed Recovery for Scotland 25.9.20

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Trauma Informed Recovery for Scotland

Purpose

1. This paper outlines a proposed Elected Members briefing regarding the shared ambition to take trauma informed approach to recovery in Scotland. It seeks agreement to share this with all Elected Members in Scotland to raise awareness and understanding of the approach and how we can together achieve the ambition of responding to the needs of those in our communities affected by trauma and adversity.

Current COSLA Position

2. The Deputy First Minister and the COSLA President have written to all Council and Health Board Chief Executives, as well as wider partner senior officers seeking support to develop a trauma informed and trauma responsive workforce. In doing so, our shared ambition is to respond collectively to the needs of those in our communities who have been affected by trauma and adversity, either in their childhood or later in life.
3. COSLA shares the ambition of ensuring all those affected are properly supported to live a life free from fear and full of opportunity. We acknowledge and accept that, during the pandemic, there has been an increased impact on those who have experienced or continue to experience trauma. As such it is only right that, as we recover, we place a firm focus on those most vulnerable to ensure that they are not forgotten or left behind.
4. Councils have clearly demonstrated that we play a vital part in ensuring our communities are safe, healthy places to life, learn and work. As part of this work, there is a role for all employees and Elected Members to consider how we can best recognise and acknowledge the trauma and abuse that is being experienced. We should do this in order to support those in our communities and our workforce who have had traumatic experiences and live with the impact.
5. As previously noted, the Scottish Government are taking forward four key actions in partnership with stakeholders:
 - i) Providing inter-generational support for parents, families and children to prevent ACEs.
 - ii) Reducing the negative impact of ACEs for children and young people.
 - iii) Developing adversity and trauma-informed workforce and services.

- iv) Increasing societal awareness of trauma and adversity and support action across communities.

What is changing?

6. Leaders agreed to support the ambition of delivering a trauma informed approach at the previous Leaders meeting. This involves delivering the three asks of - providing a strong signal of leadership to your own workforce; nominating a local Trauma Champion(s) with an appropriate level of seniority to influence change; and encouraging all employers within your Local Authority to prioritise and support high quality, accredited training in trauma informed practice at an appropriate level for their workforce.
7. In order to ensure we encourage awareness and understanding across the Scottish Local Government family, an Elected Members Briefing (appendix 1) has been developed collaboratively with the Improvement Service which aims to raise awareness of the impact of psychological trauma on individuals and communities.
8. The briefing highlights how adopting a trauma-informed approach to Scotland's COVID-19 recovery, renewal and transformation agenda can support key priorities in "building back better", including improving outcomes for vulnerable people and communities affected by trauma and supporting workforce wellbeing and resilience.

Proposed COSLA Position

9. Leaders are asked to commit to sharing the briefing with all Elected Members, to provide comments on the briefing and identify any further support which can be provided nationally and locally.

Next Steps

10. If the recommendations are agreed today, COSLA will work with the Improvement Service to ensure the briefing is updated and sent out to all Councils.

October 2020

