



This Code of Ethics is the fundamental point of reference and lens through which the Network's suite of policies should be viewed. The intent of all policies of The Network is to utilise language which aligns with the trauma lens, vision and values; safe, person-centred, kind, collaborative and empowered. As a learning space the network is committed to the ongoing development and improvement of our work to ensure that this is the case. Policies are regularly reviewed and membership feedback is welcomed as part of this process.

Code of Ethics

The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network (The Network) Code of Ethics is one of the ways we put our Network's trauma informed values into practice. It recognises that everything we do in connection to the Network will be, and should be, measured against the highest possible standards of ethical conduct and our own aspirations to be a trauma informed and shame sensitive community. Our commitment to the highest standards helps us to embody the values enshrined within our Plymouth Trauma Lens, be respectful and caring of those who have experienced trauma and adversity, provide a safe space for Network members to connect and learn together reflectively, and enable us to attract new members to the Network community. Enabling each other to feel safe, be safe and enjoy trusted and respectful relationships has been key to our success and something we need to always consider.

Please read this Code of Ethics and our Plymouth Trauma Lens values and embrace both in spirit and letter, always bearing in mind that each of us has a personal responsibility to encourage other Network members to incorporate the principles of the Code and values into our work.

The Network has always been a place where respectful challenge is embraced, indeed it's how we learn together and constantly shape our understanding of what being trauma informed and shame sensitive means. If you have a question or ever think that one of your fellow Network members, directors, or the Network as a whole may be falling short of our commitment, don't be silent. We want – and need – to hear from you.



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Who Must Follow Our Code?

We expect all Trauma Informed Plymouth Network members, Community Interest Company (CIC) directors and anyone holding an office or role assigned to support the CIC to know and aspire to follow the Code. This includes those engaged in any branch of the Network. Breaches of the Code will elicit an enquiry aimed at reflection and learning but could also result in remedial action.

This includes those engaged in any sub-branch of the Network. Failure to do so will entail an enquiry into the ethical breach and could result in remedial action. While this is not something that will be considered lightly, serious breaches of the Code could



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lead to Network membership, a CIC director's role, or any other assigned Network role being reconsidered. Moreover, while the Code is specifically written for Network members and CIC directors, we expect anyone who is temporarily assigned to perform work or services for the Network, or who engage with the Network at our invitation, to follow the Code in connection with their work or engagement with us. Failure of a covered service provider to follow the Code could result in their relationship with the Network being concluded.

What If I Have a Code-Related Question or Concern?

Anna Moss is the director assigned as the Ethics lead for the Network. If you have a question or concern, please contact this director anna.moss@plymouth.gov.uk or the Network coordinators info@The Network.org to share your concern. If it makes you feel safer or more confident in highlighting an issue, then please feel free to ask another member to raise the concern on your behalf. There is a form at the end of this document if using it is helpful.

Whistleblowing

It is important that people within the Network have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrongdoing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by The Network to protect whistleblowers. Procedures for whistleblowing are set out in the Network Safeguarding Policy as a well as an appendix to this code.

Our Commitment to all Network Members and Others we Encounter

The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network is an open network which embraces participation from all its members. The Network is an independent collaborative space that is neither mandated, controlled, nor belongs to any specific city, voluntary, statutory, or commercial partnership system. The Network may be invited to be represented and participate within these as a trusted stakeholder, and Network members may happen to participate and influence these as part of their own professional roles. However, the Network's integrity and independence is something we value, and therefore no part of the Network will be used as a wider city partnership system delivery, task and finish or sub-group unless it is expressly agreed by the Network directors. As a place where we reflect and learn collaboratively together and where we respect the views of our members, the Network is also a politically neutral space and will not endorse or promote any specific political party, group, or interest.



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Members value the Network because we offer a safe, kind, and trusted space for conversation, connection, and reflective learning. We hold ourselves to our trauma lens values in how we treat members and others we connect with. Keeping the following principles in mind will help us to maintain that high standard:

1. The Trauma Lens Values

Safe – We prioritise emotional and psychological safety as a foundation for positive relationships and understanding the impact of shame for those affected by trauma and adversity. We endeavour to make people feel safe in all our Network activity.

Person Centred – We see the person in each and every interaction and seek to build upon the strengths each person brings to the Network, ensuring they have a voice, and that their lived experience is recognised and valued.

Kind – We avoid judgement and understand that shaming and blaming language can damage emotional safety and harm relationships. When we are required to challenge others or hold them to account, we will do so with compassion and with a view to maintaining positive relationships.

Collaborative – We work together for the best possible outcome, being open when something hasn't worked and being reflective in how we can be better together.

Empowering – We 'dare to try' to enact cultural change, seeking to make a difference and be the change we want to see.

2. Valuing Lived and Living Experience

From its inception the lived and living experience of trauma and adversity has been at the heart of the Trauma Informed Plymouth Network. Many of our members have direct, or vicarious experiences of harm and the Network is a place where these experiences can be shared safely and responded to appropriately, kindly and in a shame sensitive manner. It is these experiences that so often shape the strength and creativity of our Network.

Lived and living experience, quite rightly, is taking a more central role in informing the development of trauma informed approaches. However, the developing interest in how trauma impacts upon individual outcomes, and an expanding array of organisations seeking to elicit the views and contribution of individuals with lived and living experiences to shape the future development



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of their services carries some risk. The potential for those with lived and living experience to become exploited or further harmed through inappropriate, ill-considered, or less empathetic interactions should always be considered. This risk can apply to the actions of the Network itself and its membership as much as the risk from outside agencies.

The Network is committed to nurturing, encouraging, and giving a voice to lived experience. The Lived Experience branch of the Network is an important part of this commitment and will help the Network to ensure it's keeping to its own values. Members are encouraged to contact the Network coordinator should they wish to join the Lived Experience group.

3. Integrity

Our Network reputation is that we are safe, kind, and trustworthy. Our integrity is our most valuable asset, and it is up to all of us to make sure that we continually earn that trust. All our communications and other interactions with our Network members and others who encounter the Network should be directed to maintaining and increasing their trust in us.

4. Privacy & Security

The Network does not hold or retain on record any sensitive personal data in relation to its membership. However, network members and at times others, do sometimes share their stories and as a result entrust us with their personal information. This can include their lived and living experience of trauma and adversity. Preserving that trust requires that each of us respect and protect the privacy, sensitivity, and security of that information. We take the private, personal, and sensitive information of our members seriously and will always seek to protect this information from any inappropriate or unauthorised access or sharing. All members have a role in respecting the privacy of other members and have an ethical responsibility to protect both the personal information and the lived and living experience that is expressed within the Network.

Network meetings and reflective learning sessions are increasingly online events. At times these sessions will be recorded to enable other members to access the learning. There is a possibility that personal experience may be shared in these discussions, and we ask that all members do not make their own recordings of meetings or share Network recordings inappropriately.



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5. Learning from Feedback

Part of being reflective and honest is being responsive to feedback. We value and embrace the feedback from our members and others who connect to the Network. We take pride in responding to communications from our members, whether questions, problems, or compliments. Please use the form at the end of this code to help you do that.

6. Take Action – be an active bystander

Any time you feel Network members aren't being well-served, please let someone within the Network know about it either by emailing info@TheNetwork.org or by completing the feedback and concern form at the end of this document. Your concern or complaint will be responded to within 10 working days. As a Network which holds person centred approached at its heart, the format for feeding back and resolving any concern or complaint will be discussed with you at that time. We don't always get things right even when we act with the best of intentions. Continually improving how we recognise and respond to trauma involves all of us, and we're proud that Network members are empowered to take the initiative to step forward when the interest of the Network is at stake.

7. Diversity and Equality

The Network is committed to preventing unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, colour, religion, national origin, pregnancy status, sex, gender identity, age, marital status, mental or physical disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics protected by law. However, as a Network we seek to go beyond any legal duty and seek to make the Network a safe space that embraces difference and is inclusive and welcoming to all. We aim to challenge discrimination based on people's experience of trauma and adversity, understanding that these experiences are often misunderstood, misrepresented, or ignored and can also lead to a lack of fairness, inappropriate responses, people facing disadvantage, or social injustice. The Network Inclusion and Resilience Branch is central to the network's commitments in this area.

8. Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination

The network prohibits discrimination, harassment and bullying in any form – verbal, physical, or visual. If you believe you've been bullied, harassed, or discriminated against by anyone within the Network, or by a person connected



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to the Trauma Informed Network Plymouth CIC, we strongly encourage you to immediately report the incident a Network coordinator, via info@TheNetwork.org a CIC Director or to a person holding an office or role assigned to support the CIC. Your concern or complaint will be responded to within 10 working days. As a Network which holds person centred approached at its heart, the format for feeding back and resolving any concern or complaint will be discussed with you at that time. The Network Directors will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaints and take appropriate action. A form is available at the end of this document if you find it helpful.

9. Conflicts of Interest

The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network is a Community Interest Company (CIC) that welcomes a diverse and open membership including those representing business interests that may promote and sell products and services. However, the Network will not endorse any business or its sold services and products, and members should not do so by or on behalf of the Network. The exception is where the Network chooses to enter a formal partnership relationship with a service provider from the statutory, community, voluntary or private sector that helps to promote the Core Values and work of the Network.

If you feel you are in a position where there are competing loyalties between your role as a Network member and a business interest that may create a conflict of interest, then please bring the matter to the attention of the Network coordinators at info@The Network.org or a CIC director. Contact details are found on our website.

10. Intellectual Property

As a reflective learning community, the Network continues to review and reflect upon the emerging evidence regarding trauma informed approaches & Adverse Childhood Experiences. This means we learn from others and often access resources and tools that are the intellectual property of other people and organisations. Where we use such resources, we will always reference them to ensure the intellectual property owner receives the proper acknowledgement of their work. In the same way, resources produced and developed within the Network remain the intellectual property of the Trauma Informed Network CIC and should be properly referenced as belonging to the Network, or the specific named members who have developed the resources.



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Members must respect all copyright and other intellectual property laws, including laws governing the fair use of copyrights, trademarks, and brands, including those owned by the Network.

11. Ethical Research

As a learning Network we seek to be supportive of those wishing to access the Network membership and Network resources to develop new learning and understanding around trauma informed practice. In particular, we welcome academic enquiry and are keen to share the Plymouth trauma informed journey with passionate and ethical researchers who are seeking to develop new insight in the field of trauma.

However, as a Network built on the foundations of the lived and living experience of trauma, we are committed to ensuring our Network members feel safe when research seeks to connect to their lived and living experience. Any researcher wishing to work with the Network membership in this regard needs to discuss their research proposal and methodology with the Network coordinator and it must be approved by the CIC board of directors. The appropriate ethics approval from the relevant academic body will need to be authorised. Where researchers seek to connect with our member's lived and living experience, they will need to demonstrate how they will:

- Manage the informed consent of members participating in the research.
- Manage anonymity and confidentiality.
- Protect members from harm, specifically in relation to causing further trauma or through re-traumatizing them by re-connecting them to previous harmful events.
- Manage data storage, data retention and data sharing, particularly in relation to sensitive, personal data.

Where concerns arise regarding the conduct of any person or body conducting research, notably where they do not align with our Network values, the Network CIC board of directors reserve the right to ask for a meeting with the appropriate lead researcher to discuss these concerns. If the concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily, then Network CIC board of directors reserve the right to end the research collaboration as not being in the best interests of the Network and its members.



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12. Representing the Network

Since its inception the Network has valued its autonomy and its integrity, choosing to work alongside, but remaining fully independent from other city agencies, services, businesses, or partnership systems. This independence is important as it enables us to retain an absolute focus on our values, nurture, and safeguard those with lived and living experience, and empower an inclusive and diverse Network membership that welcomes everybody, even those who are not part of the 'system'.

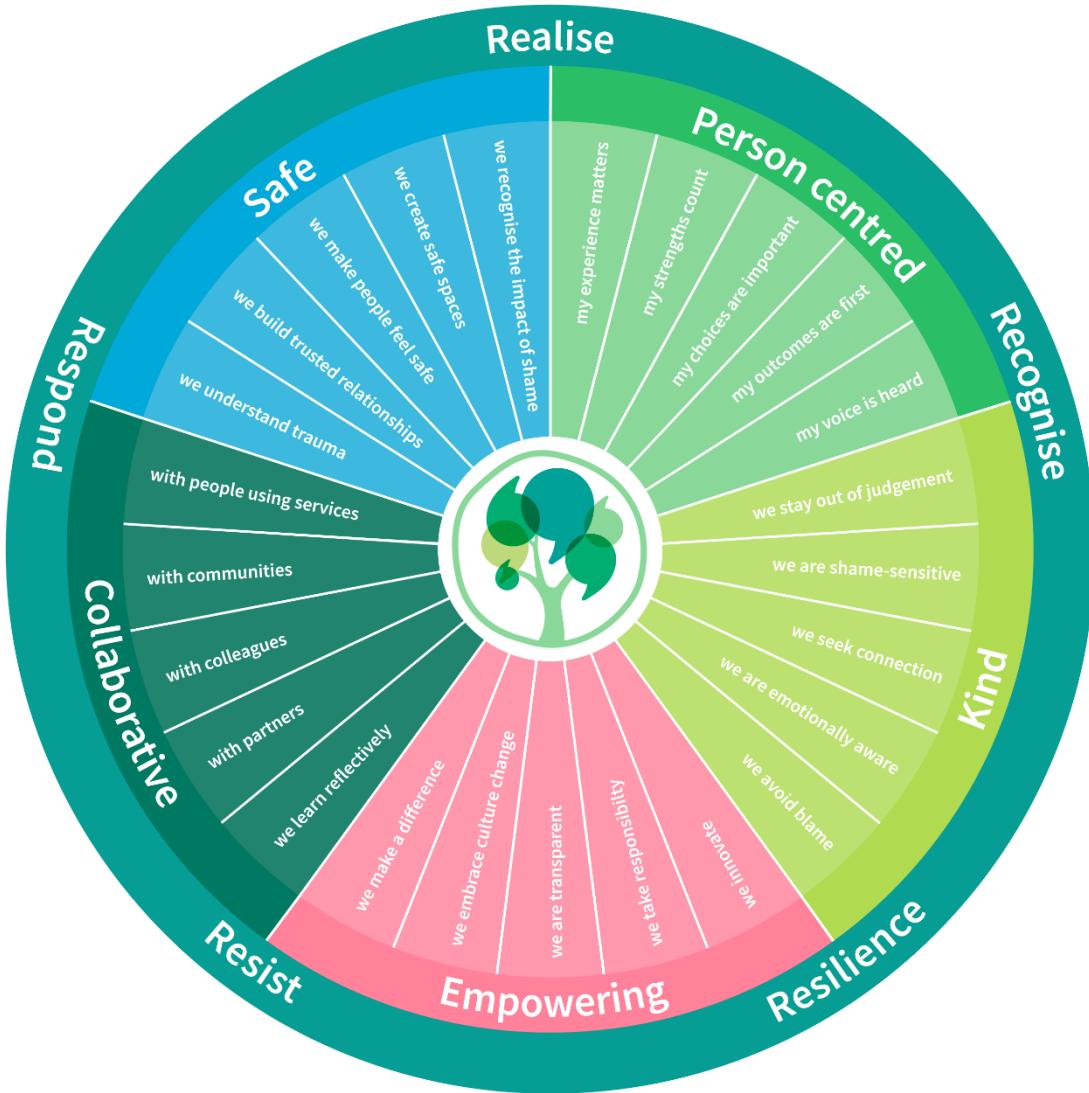
The establishment of the Network CIC has been enacted with the precise purpose of protecting the integrity and independence of the Network. While it will allow the Network to develop and expand, it's not about making the Network a business or a corporation, but rather ensuring there is effective management and governance of the Network to ensure it continues to work in the best interest of all of its members. The CIC directors are focused on maintaining the standards and values of the Network while addressing its longer-term sustainability to continue to offer members the opportunities to encounter new learning and reflection and work together to make Plymouth a more trauma responsive city.

Members have always been encouraged to '*be the change we want to see*' and represent the Network and its values wherever the opportunity might rise. This sense of a shared purpose and a feeling of empowerment has been a key foundation of the Network journey to date. An active, passionate, and committed Network membership is something we continue to value and aspire to and it's only by coming together that we will achieve our aims. However, we do ask that members take care in speaking on behalf of the Network as there is a risk that even the most well intended actions could compromise the Network's values, ethical position and reputation. This is particularly relevant if you're asked to endorse a product, business interest, or something else on behalf of the Network, support a funding application as a representative of the Network, or indeed represent the Network at a formal event, conference, or seminar. Where such situations arise, or wherever Network members need support, then please seek further advice from a Network coordinator, or a CIC director.



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13. The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network Lens



Agreed by the Network Board of Directors

DATE: August 2024

Review Schedule: Annually



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Appendix 1.

Compliments, Concerns or Complaints

The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network (The Network) aims to provide the best possible service, adhering to its Code of Ethics and embodying the Vision and Values of the Trauma lens. We would like to hear your feedback on your experience of membership of or connection to The Network. We acknowledge that even with the best of intentions, occasionally mistakes can be made, and it is essential as a learning community that we know when this happens so it can be learned from and improved.

Compliments and Feedback

Your views are really important. They can help shape our future development and ensure our service users' needs are being met. This can also support applications for funding and quality accreditation assessments. Please contact the Network co-ordinators at info@The Network.org or submit the form below if you find it helpful.

Complaints

We recognise that from time-to-time things can, and do, go wrong. This can lead to dissatisfaction and frustration. Please let us know if you are unhappy with the experience you have had and we will make every effort to resolve your concern. We can contact you to discuss your concern, with your permission. As a member or partner of the Trauma Informed Plymouth Network, your views are really important to us. Please contact the Network co-ordinators at info@The Network.org or submit the form below if you find it helpful. Your concern or complaint will be responded to within 10 working days. As a Network which holds person centred approached at its heart, the format for feeding back and resolving any concern or complaint will be discussed with you at that time.



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Please Select by Hi-lighting from the Following:		
	Compliment	Feedback
Concern		
Your Name		
Phone number		
Email		
Please detail the information you want to share with us		
Have you already informed us of the information above? Please circle	Yes	No
Do you require a response? Please circle	Yes	No



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Appendix 2

Whistleblowing Procedure

The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network (The Network) is committed to being open, honest and accountable. It encourages a free and open culture in its dealings between The Board of Directors and those working with The Network; partners, members, volunteers and trainers. This is informed by the Code of Ethics and Vision and Values of The Network.

This policy aims to help The Board of Directors, partners, members, volunteers and trainers. to raise any serious concerns, they may have about colleagues or their employer with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

It is written in the context of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects employees who 'blow the whistle' on malpractices within their organisation.

What types of concerns?

The policy is intended to deal with serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following:

- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A failure in the protection of children or vulnerable adults
- A miscarriage of justice
- A health and safety risk to an individual
- Damage to the environment
- Or concealment of the above.

How to raise a concern

The Director(s) designated to handle whistleblowing concerns are Jodie Pitcher jodie.pitcher@eci.org.uk and Sarah Cox sarahcoxisw@outlook.com and for the purposes of this policy shall be known as the Whistleblowing Officer(s).



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Individuals should in most cases, first report their concern to one of the Network Co-ordinators on info@The Network.org who are expected to respond to that matter. If the Co-ordinators cannot deal with the matter, or the matter is about them, they will refer the concern to the Whistleblowing Officer(s). (Please see above for contact details.)

Dependent on the seriousness and sensitivity of the matter, and who is suspected of the wrongdoing, the individual can, if necessary, report directly to the Whistleblowing Officer(s). If the matter concerns the Whistleblowing Officer(s), it should be raised with The Chair of the Board of Directors.

Individuals are encouraged to raise their concerns in writing where possible, setting out the background and history of their concerns (giving names, dates and places where possible) and indicating the reasons for their concerns.

If any individual is unsure whether to use this procedure or they want independent advice at any stage, they could contact:

- ✓ their trade union (if applicable), or
- ✓ the independent charity, Public Concern at Work's legal helpline on 020 7404 6609, email: helpline@pcaw.co.uk

Public Concern at Work will be able to advise on how and with whom to raise a concern about malpractice.

Disclosures made to a legal advisor in the course of obtaining legal advice will be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

If the individual reasonably believes that the matter relates wholly or mainly to the conduct of a person or body other than The Network or any other matter for which a person or body other than The Network has legal responsibility, the disclosure should be made to that other person or body.

Protecting the individual raising the concern

The Network will take appropriate action to protect the whistleblowing individual from any harassment, victimisation or bullying.-The matter will be treated confidentially if the individual requests it and their name or position will not be revealed without their permission unless The Network has to do so by law. If in other circumstances the concern cannot be resolved without revealing the individual's identity, the Whistleblowing Officer will discuss with the individual whether and how to proceed.

Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective, but the Whistleblowing Officer will decide whether or not to consider the matter taking into account:

- ✓ the seriousness of the matter.
- ✓ whether the concern is believable.



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- ✓ whether an investigation can be carried out based on the information provided.

How The Network will deal with the concern

How the concern will be dealt with, will depend on what it involves. It is likely that further enquiries and/or investigation will be necessary. The concern may be investigated by The Network's Whistleblowing Officer, The Board of Directors, using the Code of Ethics procedures and guidance. It may be referred to the police, other agencies such as Social Services, an external auditor or an independent investigator.

It may be necessary for the individual to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings.

The Network will give the individual feedback on the progress and outcome of any investigation wherever possible.

If the suspicions are not confirmed by an investigation, the matter will be closed. Individuals will not be treated or regarded any differently for raising the concern, and their confidentiality will continue to be protected.