



Meeting	Policing Performance Committee
Date	10 June 2025
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Trauma Informed Practice
Presented By	ACC Catriona Paton, Policing Together
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to update the Scottish Police Authority on Police Scotland's current position in respect of Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) and future plans to create and deliver a plan to embed TIP in our organisation and as part of the wider delivery plan for the justice sector.

Members are invited to discuss the content of this report.

1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1 The Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill is currently at stage 3 consultation. The Bill will progress the ambition and priorities set out in the Vision for Justice to deliver person-centred and trauma-informed practices, including taking greater action to hear victims' voices.
- 1.2 Police Scotland's 2030 Vision supports this ambition. It sets out to ensure that victims are fully heard and supported, with our service more tailored to victims' needs through a trauma-informed approach. We will do this by co-ordinating the delivery of trauma-informed practice in collaboration with partners and further develop trauma-informed training and mental health awareness ensuring staff are confident, trained and empowered.

2 VICTIMS, WITNESSES AND JUSTICE REFORM (SCOTLAND) BILL

- 2.1 A Legislative Impact Assessment has been carried out in respect of the Bill. Whilst there will likely be extensive legal input and associated cost required on several aspects of the Bill, including consequences and implications for existing legislation provision, it is evident that the highest impact will be the work required to become a trauma-informed and responsive organisation as outlined in part 2 of the Bill.
- 2.2 The journey towards this cultural transformation will need Executive Leadership, investment, collaboration, training and planning.

3 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

- 3.1 Following an internal TIP review, it was agreed that a Strategic Oversight Board (SOB) supported by a Working Group (WG) would be established to co-ordinate and provide strategic direction and governance on all aspects of this work. ACC Catriona Paton, Policing Together chairs the SOB, and the first meeting took place on 7 April 2025. The first Working Group is scheduled for June 2025.

4 INVESTMENT

- 4.1 Police Scotland funded the recruitment of a dedicated Trauma-Informed Strategy and Implementation Manager and two Trauma-Informed Support Officers to oversee and deliver the organisational plan to embed TIP. The team will form part of the current Victims

and Witnesses workstream within Policing Together Division. The initial funding period ends on 31 March 2026.

5 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1 The [National Trauma Transformation Programme \(NTTP\)](#) created by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) in partnership with Scottish Government and COSLA has published a [Roadmap for Creating Trauma-Informed and Responsive Change](#).
- 5.2 This outlines nine key drivers and six main stages which are essential for embedding and sustaining trauma-informed practice. The work of the NTTP has been carried out in partnership with the Scottish Government to help inform and support the Scottish Workforce to become trauma informed.
- 5.3 The nine key drivers are:
- Organisational culture
 - Leadership
 - Staff care, support and wellbeing
 - Feedback loops
 - Sharing of power with people with lived experience of trauma
 - Staff knowledge, skills, confidence and capacity
 - Policies and processes
 - Budget
 - Service design and delivery
- 5.4 The six main stages are:
- Creating the right conditions – long-term executive commitment
 - Understanding experiences of our organisation, systems and how we currently work – identify strengths and opportunities for improvement
 - Developing our aims – collaboratively develop a plan to support vision
 - Implement and test change – through training and support
 - Consolidate change across our organisation, systems and practice – to support long-term sustainability and utilise feedback loops
 - Ensuring sustainability – create an improvement cycle and ensure TIP is inherent within the organisation

- 5.5 In May 2023, NES published the [Trauma-Informed Justice Knowledge and Skills Framework](#). The framework applies to all justice workers including leaders and managers. It recognises that people working in different roles will need different trauma-informed knowledge and skills. The framework is cumulative and defines practice based on the nature and type of workforce roles.
- 5.6 Police Scotland is a key partner in the [Trauma-Informed workstream](#) of the Victims' Task Force. We are working with other justice partners to create and deliver a collaborative plan to embed trauma-informed practice in our justice sector and in line with the NTT. Supported by the Scottish Government, this workstream has developed a partnership wide monitoring and reporting template which will support all partners in planning, monitoring and reporting progress toward becoming a trauma-informed organisation. The template sets out activities and outcomes in the short, medium and long term and is derived from the Trauma-Informed Justice Knowledge and Skills Framework and the Roadmap for creating trauma-informed and responsive change. It is expected that this will provide a co-ordinated and overarching position which will also be used to form the basis of a progress update to the Victims' Taskforce.

6 TRAINING

- 6.1 The Trauma-Informed Justice Knowledge and Skills Framework defines the nature and type of workforce roles as follows:
- **Trauma-Informed** – foundation knowledge and skills for all justice workers.
 - **Trauma-Skilled** – anyone in direct contact with witnesses. Includes the shared knowledge and skills that anyone working at any of the enhanced levels will need.
 - **Trauma-Enhanced** – additional knowledge and skills required for workers with significant responsibilities in meeting any of the aims of a trauma-informed justice system for witnesses.

The framework has identified that all police officers should be trained to '**Trauma-Skilled**' level.

- 6.2 There are four different enhanced levels, two of which are relevant to specialist officers including detective officers. These are:
- Advocacy and Support
 - Evidence Gathering

The framework provides the following definitions:

Advocacy and Support

“Designed to meet the needs of workers who provide advocacy and/or support services to victims and witnesses, for example workers from victim information and advice, Rape Crisis Scotland, Victim Support Scotland and potentially some specialist liaison officers (e.g. Sexual offences liaison officers (SOLOs) and Family liaison officers (FLOs))”

Evidence Gathering

“Designed to meet the needs of anyone who has a role in gathering information or evidence directly from witnesses, including those who direct or oversee the gathering of evidence. This may include Police detectives, Forensic medical examiners, statement takers, and some solicitors.”

There are approximately 4200 officers within Police Scotland who have a specialism. This includes sexual offence liaison officers (SOLOs), family liaison officers (FLOs) and investigative interviewers, who are required to be trauma enhanced.

Police Scotland already deliver a number of training courses which include aspects of trauma-informed practice. This includes:

- Probationer Training (CARES, Act Don't React, Mental Health Training, Children and Young People Training and Lifelines Training.)
- Safer Communities Early Intervention through Education (Children and Young People Training)
- Detective Training (including SOLO, FLO, VRI courses)
- Trauma Impact Prevention Training (pilot in North Command only)

- 6.3 Learning Training and Development, Policing Together and Specialist Crime Division continue to work to review all aspects of training and are liaising directly with NES to support this. NES have recently published two online training packages for the justice sector for the Trauma-Informed and Trauma-Skilled levels. This is available to Police Scotland through the NES training platform with work ongoing to add this to our moodle training platform for ease and monitoring purposes. A Short Life Working Group has been

created to review current Trauma-Enhanced training to specialist officers and consider options.

7 STAFF WELLBEING

- 7.1 The prevalence of traumatic experiences means that trauma will inevitably impact many of those within our workforce, whether through personal experiences or through the work we do. It is vital that all workers feel safe and supported in our workplaces. This is particularly important when we are caring for and supporting others: those of us directly supporting people affected by trauma face an increased risk of experiencing vicarious trauma, moral injury and compassion fatigue.
- 7.2 Through the established Wellbeing Programme, Police Scotland have consistently placed mental health of our people as a priority and seek to support staff through several health and wellbeing measures including:
- Trauma Risk Management Programme (TRiM)
 - Occupational Health
 - Employee Assistance Programme
 - Your Wellbeing/Resilience Assessment/Stress Risk Assessment
 - Wellbeing Champions
 - Mental Health Training - Lifelines Scotland (national project to support the wellbeing and resilience of Scotland's emergency responder community)
- 7.3 As one of the key drivers to embedding and sustaining TIP in the workplace, staff wellbeing will continue to be a focus for Police Scotland to support a thriving workforce in line with our 2030 vision.

This is evident through the Workforce Wellbeing Action plan:
<https://www.spa.police.uk/spa-media/lxftp1qrm/item-2-1-health-and-wellbeing-action-plan.pdf>

8 CONCLUSION

It is imperative that progress continues to be made to further our journey towards becoming a trauma-informed and responsive organisation. This long-term transformation will require sustained investment and strategic oversight, notwithstanding the legislative requirements, there are significant benefits to progressing this work including:

- Improved experience for members of the public engaging with Police Scotland's officers and staff in any capacity
- Increased public confidence in our organisation
- Improvement in officer and staff wellbeing
- Increased quality of evidence from victims and witnesses

With a dedicated team and governance structures now established, it is recommended that work begins to draft an organisational implementation plan to consider the work already underway, identify gaps and align with the overarching plan of the Victims' Taskforce and the NTPP.

We anticipate the delivery of the organisational implementation plan, including roll out of initial training, by Q4 2025/26 to ensure suitable collaboration and governance. Specific timescales for delivery will be further developed and agreed through the Strategic Oversight Board.

9 BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Business implications of embedding trauma-informed practice have already been set out in the Legislative Impact Assessment for the Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill and consultation has taken place with relevant business areas.

10 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. An estimated cost of between £1-2 million has been assessed and calculated relating to the current status and resourcing of the scheme and indicative values from known/required core services.

11 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. There are no personnel implications in this report.

12 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. There are no legal implications in this report.
Advice will be required on compliance/amendment of procedures to satisfy this provision once finalised, and in relation to establishment of service standards and complaints procedures re those functions.

13 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1. There are no reputational implications in this report.

14 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1. There are no social implications in this report.

15 COMMUNITY IMPACT

15.1. There are no community implications in this report.

16 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

16.1. There are no equality implications in this report.

17 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

17.1. There are no environmental implications in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the content of this report.