



**FUTURE** PATHWAYS

Scotland's In Care Survivor  
Support Fund



**THE LASTING  
DIFFERENCE**

Sustaining nonprofit organisations,  
leaders & impact

# Future Pathways Action Learning Programme

## Programme Report

March 2023

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## 1. Background

Future Pathways is the first alliance partnership of its kind in Scotland, comprising Health in Mind, Penumbra, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, and funded by Scottish Government. Future Pathways commissions support for survivors of in-care abuse or neglect via its network of over 65 delivery partner organisations across the UK as well as internationally.

Since its inception in 2016, learning about the impact of the alliance's work has been a key priority. An Impact Report for 2016-2019 was published in 2021, which assessed progress towards Future Pathways' four priority pathways. Two of these pathways were identified as priority areas for future development:

- 👉 Enabling access to services
- 👉 Promoting high-quality support

To support on-going learning and development, Future Pathways was keen to engage with delivery partner organisations to:

- 👉 Explore best practice and ways to remove barriers to support.
- 👉 Explore how the collaborative relationship between Future Pathways and delivery partners supports the sustainable impact of support for survivors.
- 👉 Identify ways to increase collaborative working and stakeholder involvement.
- 👉 Inform Future Pathways' priority themes and influence wider system change and improvement.

To support this engagement with delivery partner organisations, Future Pathways commissioned The Lasting Difference consultancy to facilitate:

- 👉 **Two engagement events in May 2022.** These events shared learning from the Future Pathways Impact Report and invited attendees to join a six-month action learning programme. The events were attended by 10 delivery partner organisations, as well as Future Pathways' team members.
- 👉 **Six-month action learning programme.** The action learning programme commenced in August 2022 and concluded in February 2023.

This report presents learning and feedback from the action learning programme. Quotes are used throughout the report as illustrative examples of programme discussions.

## 2. Action learning programme: participants, approach and themes

**Programme participants:** eleven practitioners from nine delivery partner organisations took part, as well as five Future Pathways team members:

<b>Aberdeen Counselling and Information Services, Mental Health Aberdeen</b>	Andrew Mann, Counselling Manager
<b>Counselling Psychologist</b>	Robin Trewartha, independent practitioner
<b>Glasgow Association for Mental Health</b>	Alice McLaughlin, Project Leader
<b>Future Pathways</b>	Ewain Black, Support Coordinator Rachel Wood, Support Coordinator Michelle Wood, Support Coordinator Louise Hall, Impact & Evaluation Lead Nell Glen, Partnership Relationship Lead Tammy Kirk, Head of Services & Improvement Kerry Girdwood, Service Manager
<b>Health in Mind</b>	Samantha Wilson, Clinical Manager
<b>Lifelink</b>	Euan Reid, Service Delivery Manager
<b>LinkLiving</b>	Elaine Wroe, Project Coordinator Survivor Services/Trauma Therapist
<b>MindMosaic Counselling and Therapy</b>	Shumela Ahmed, Director Hayley MacDonald, Senior Projects Manager
<b>Resilience Learning Partnership</b>	Ross Murray, Education Coordinator
<b>Workers Education Association</b>	

This range of organisations and practitioners brought a depth and breadth of knowledge, experience and expertise. A huge thanks to all programme members who shared their insights and experiences so generously over the six programme sessions.

**Programme approach:** establishing this programme is an excellent example of five core behaviours of systems leadership<sup>1</sup>:

### 1. Clarifying: being intentional, facing up to hard decisions

The programme brought delivery partners and team members together to explore and clarify roles, responsibilities and shared goals within the collaborative commissioning relationship. Themes were informed by intelligence and data gathered as part of the Future Pathways impact reporting process.

### 2. Curiosity: making space for uncertainty and creativity

Programme members came with a genuine spirit of curiosity. All members shared their experiences, perspectives and knowledge generously, with honesty, openness and a firm commitment to learning together.

### 3. Convening: generous leadership across organisational boundaries

The programme provided protected time and space for participants to share good practice; to better understand barriers and challenges; and to explore ideas and options for development.

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<sup>1</sup> Shine a Light Guide to Systems Sustainability, Leadership and Capacity, The Lasting Difference

#### 4. **Challenging: courage and persistence**

A respectful space was created where group members positively challenged ideas, assumptions and ways of working, and shared ideas for where improvements could be made.

#### 5. **Championing: voices for change**

Future Pathways will share programme learning with key stakeholders to improve understanding of the benefits and challenges of taking a collaborative approach to commissioning.

**Programme themes:** Learning and insights are presented below against the following key themes that emerged:

- 👉 **What works:** the benefits and impact of Future Pathways' approach to collaborative commissioning.
- 👉 **Challenges and what might help:** challenges which impact the approach and ideas for future development.

The report concludes with some reflections from group members and programme facilitator.

### 3. A collaborative, outcomes-focused approach to commissioning support.

Future Pathways, survivors and delivery partners work collaboratively to:

- ☺ Understand survivors' needs and aspirations.
- ☺ Explore options and offer choices.
- ☺ Put in place support based on survivors' outcomes and aspirations.
- ☺ Measure progress and impact of support.



Programme participants noted that whilst this approach is straightforward in theory, there are layers of complexity in practice.

Discussions identified a range of benefits to Future Pathways' approach. These are outlined below, followed by the impact this has for survivors, delivery partners and Future Pathways.

#### 3.1 What works: benefits and impact of Future Pathways' approach to collaborative commissioning

*'The beauty of the Future Pathways' approach is that it enables people to access support that is right for them.'*

#### The benefits...

##### Trust and clarity

Taking time to build trusting relationships is the foundation on which the collaborative commissioning approach is built.

##### How this supports practice:

- ☺ **Time and space:** survivors have time and space to build trust with their Support Coordinator and delivery partner/s.
- ☺ **Straightforward:** survivors, delivery partners and Future Pathways have clarity on their roles and rights.
- ☺ **Coproduction:** the aims and parameters of support and confidentiality are jointly agreed, and all parties come to agreement on next steps and ways forward.

## Choice and flexibility

Future Pathways supports survivors to access a wide range of emotional, practical and developmental support. There is a mutual understanding between survivors, Future Pathways and delivery partners that progress towards outcomes may not be a linear process and that support might need to be adapted.

### How this supports practice:

- 👉 **Focused on needs and aspirations:** survivors explore their aspirations and access support that best suits their needs.
- 👉 **Choice and control:** survivors have choice and control over their support.
- 👉 **Flexibility:** There is flexibility to adapt support if needs, situations or aspirations change. Delivery partners can offer access to different types of support they provide (e.g. counselling, group support) if their support conversations with the survivor indicate this would be helpful.
- 👉 **More than money.** Future Pathways has budgets that help people access a range of support, but the way of working is equally important. *'It's not just about money, it's about Future Pathways' philosophy. Support Coordinators are empowered to take time with survivors and have the scope and autonomy to get the right types of support.'*
- 👉 **Ability to pause.** The flexibility to pause support if something is going on in a survivor's life, is hugely helpful and important to keeping survivors engaged in support.

## Outcomes-focused support

The needs and aspirations of survivors are at the heart of discussions about support. These aspirations and goals are shared with delivery partners to inform support. As noted above, there is flexibility to adapt support if needs or circumstances change.

### How this supports practice:

- 👉 **Holistic.** Support Coordinators take a holistic view of the range of support survivors are accessing which helps identify gaps where Future Pathways could help. *'Support Coordinators are there to understand the whole process, whereas sometimes services work in silos and we can feel we are working against each other. Support Coordinators, in theory, make sure that services are working together.'*
- 👉 **The right support, at the right time.** Survivors are able to access support that enables them progress towards their goals. There is joint understanding that support might need to be adapted, and freedom and flexibility to do this. *'This is different to other commissioning relationships which tend to focus on outputs or don't understand that priorities can change over time.'*

## Building community connections

Wider community connections are crucial as support services are only a small aspect of people's lives. These community connections are so important to help people recover from trauma.

### How this supports practice:

- 👉 **Building relationships.** Building relationships with Future Pathways and delivery partners supports survivors to test out relationship building and to develop community connections.
- 👉 **Supporting endings.** Community connections are vital to building positive relationships beyond the support relationship and supporting endings.
- 👉 **Providing stepping-stones.** Building wider community connections provides a stepping-stone when someone is ready to move on from support.

## Working in a trauma-informed way

Future Pathways and delivery partners have a shared understanding of trauma and a willingness to lean into discomfort, anxiety or challenge, even if and especially when things get complicated or messy.

### How this supports practice:

- 👉 **Navigating anxiety or distress.** Support Coordinators can offer alternative or supplementary support to navigate a way through when distress or anxiety comes to the surface.
- 👉 **Trauma-informed employment practices.** Future Pathways team members get excellent support and clinical supervision to work within their professional window of tolerance. *'To be truly trauma-informed, organisations need to have trauma-informed employment practices. Future Pathways does this really well.'*
- 👉 **Collaborative.** A collaborative trauma-informed approach is taken to all aspects of the commissioning relationship, with survivors, support coordinators and delivery partners working together to plan support and review progress.
- 👉 **Building understanding of trauma.** There is an understanding that everyone can work in trauma-informed ways (you don't need to be a trauma 'specialist'). Learning about working in a trauma-informed way is shared with other professionals in survivors' lives (e.g. GPs).

#### Practice example: Sharing learning about trauma-informed practice.

A survivor was very anxious about attending dental appointments. Their Support Coordinator spoke to the dental team involved, shared learning about trauma-informed approaches and helped identify steps they could take to reduce the person's stress and anxiety. These approaches were implemented by the dental team and the person then felt able to access the treatment they needed.

## A network of support and learning

Relationships between Future Pathways and delivery partners are based on a mutual openness to continuous learning and improvement. The approach creates a network of support, knowledge and learning.

### How this supports practice:

- 👉 **Navigating complexity.** This network helps navigate complexity in survivors' lives with flexible two-way referral pathways which enable emerging needs to be recognised and addressed.
- 👉 **Openness and honesty.** Relationships and communications between delivery partners, Support Coordinators and survivors help to assess progress and to make changes if needed.
- 👉 **Continuous learning.** There is mutual understanding that support may not be a linear process and that not achieving an outcome is not a failure, rather it is an opportunity to keep learning.
- 👉 **Holistic support.** People often do not come for support with one issue. Collaborative working is therefore essential to providing holistic support.



## The impact...

### Increasing trust

- ☺ Building a trusting relationship with their Support Coordinator enables survivors to feel more able to trust delivery partners. As one survivor noted to their Support Coordinator *'I trust you, so I'll trust them.'*
- ☺ Delivery partners value the trusting relationship with Future Pathways and feel empowered to bring their knowledge and expertise to the support relationship. *'This trust that we are expert in particular areas is really important - not many commissioners have such an open and trusting relationship with us.'*
- ☺ This three-way trust enables honest conversations about progress, and for it to be okay to adapt support if needed. This results in less stressful relationships between delivery partners, survivors and Future Pathways than other commissioning relationships which can tend to focus on outputs. *'It feels like a more human approach than other commissioning relationships.'*

### Improving choice and accessibility

- ☺ Discussions with Support Coordinators increases survivors' understanding of the different types of support available and to more effectively choose what might work best for them. *'This is so different to other services, where the choice is much more limited.'*
- ☺ Delivery partners have flexibility to offer access to different types of services they provide (e.g. group support) if their support conversations with the survivor indicate this would be helpful. *'This flexibility makes sense on many levels – for the survivor, Future Pathways and delivery partners.'*
- ☺ Future Pathways enables people to access services more quickly and opens up options for different types of support.

### Supporting engagement

- ☺ Delivery partners value the ability to pause support if something is going on in the survivor's life, as this enables re-engagement with support. *'This pause stops the revolving door where people enter then exit support without experiencing the benefits. I don't know anywhere else that happens – in other services if you're out you're out.'*
- ☺ This flexibility empowers delivery partners to 'keep the door open', enabling the survivor to stay connected and re-engage when the time is right. *'Often when people miss support sessions the organisation needs to close the support contract. With Future Pathways the door is still open for them to stay connected. That is a big difference, it doesn't happen in other services. The fact the person has a bit of leeway, that makes a big difference.'*
- ☺ When support is paused the Support Coordinator acts as an anchor, keeping in touch with the survivor and the delivery partner, which helps people to re-engage when they are ready.

#### **Practice example: Supporting survivors to have ownership and agency.**

A survivor had disengaged from support sessions with a delivery partner. The delivery partner had a conversation with the Support Coordinator to explore how best to approach this and it was agreed to give the survivor time and space to decide what to do next. As a result the survivor felt they had agency over their support and after time for reflection, they made the decision to re-engage with the support sessions.

## Ensuring holistic, outcomes-focussed support

- ☺ Whilst some types of support may seem very practical or small, for example the provision of a bus pass or support to access dental treatment, the focus is on the outcome this has for the survivor. *'It's always about the outcome. The bus pass = freedom or being able to engage in social activities. Dental care = being able to smile again.'*
- ☺ Delivery partners value the different types of support that can be offered to support survivors to progress and make wider connections in their lives. *'The equipment that was bought [for a person the delivery partner was supporting] wasn't expensive, but it made a big difference to the person's life and helped them engage with a group in their community.'*
- ☺ Delivery partners feel empowered within the collaborative commissioning relationship to refer people back to the Support Coordinator if additional support is needed. *'When people raise things that are out with counselling, you can sometimes feel a bit helpless because you can't help with those issues. But with Future Pathways it makes it easier to say to the client "you can talk about that with your Support Coordinator".'*

## Building connections, extending impact

- ☺ Building wider with community links extends the ripple effect of support. Examples include strengthening family relationships; building relationships with fellow students in an educational programme; accessing peer support networks.
- ☺ Testing out relationship building with Future Pathways and delivery partners builds survivors confidence and ability to develop wider community connections and relationships.
- ☺ Strengthening community connections builds resilience and empowers survivors to make the decision to move on from support.
- ☺ The commissioning relationship increases delivery partners' ability to have a positive impact in their work with survivors. *'I don't think we would have been able to do what we did without Future Pathways.'*

## Sharing learning supports progress

- ☺ There is a commitment to sharing knowledge and learning to enable progress to be understood and support to be adapted if necessary.
- ☺ There is collective understanding that continuous learning is key to ensuring survivors' progress towards their outcomes. *'There is an understanding that it's not always straightforward, and that where you start out, might not be where you end up.'*
- ☺ This commitment to continuous learning and the understanding that support might need to be adapted enables survivors to have a feeling of progress. *'People become used to not being able to access what they need and feeling stuck. So feeling that they are progressing towards their goals can be a new and empowering feeling for them. People say, "I actually feel like things could change and things are moving".'*

## Supporting consistency

- ☺ The survivor has a consistent link back to their Support Coordinator. So whilst they may be accessing different types of support, they have continuity in their relationship with Future Pathways.
- ☺ The network of support between the Support Coordinator and delivery partner/s enables consistency and bridges gaps if things hit a bump, for example if something happens in a survivor's life or if staff change.

### 3.2 Challenges and what might help: challenges that impact the collaborative commissioning approach and ideas for improvement

*‘Small changes can make a big difference. It’s important to consider what small changes we can all make.’*

A range of barriers or challenges that impact on collaborative commissioning approaches to supporting survivors were identified. Some of these challenges are systemic and require changes and improvements across a whole range of organisations and agencies.

#### Systemic challenges

- 👉 **Trauma-informed approaches:** although much work is being done at national level to raise awareness of trauma-informed approaches<sup>2</sup>, there is not a unified position on trauma-informed practice across the various sectors and agencies survivors navigate.
- 👉 **Readiness for support:** many services require people to be ‘ready for support’ and/or have ‘three strikes and out’ policies. This makes many services inaccessible.
- 👉 **Capacity challenges:** services within the statutory and voluntary sectors are experiencing significant capacity challenges. This results in waiting lists being in place which creates barriers to access and gaps in support.
- 👉 **Outputs and outcomes:** there can be a lack of understanding amongst some commissioners about the value and importance of a qualitative outcomes-focused approach to support. This results in a tendency to focus on short-term quantitative outputs.
- 👉 **Community/peer support:** there are limited community/peer support options for survivors to access which can make moving on from services challenging.
- 👉 **National programmes:** there can be confusion about the relationships and alignment between national programmes aimed at supporting survivors (e.g. Future Pathways; Redress).

Whilst these barriers exist across the wider system, programme members noted that there are actions all organisations can take to improve the accessibility of services. Suggestions included:

- 👉 Supporting survivors to build positive relationships with other professionals in their lives (e.g. GPs).
- 👉 Taking time to listen to survivors, rather than making assumptions about what barriers they are facing.
- 👉 Doing more to understand the barriers faced by people who are currently not accessing support through Future Pathways (e.g. those experiencing homelessness).
- 👉 Raising awareness amongst other professionals involved in survivors’ lives about ways they could adapt their services to make them more trauma-informed and accessible.
- 👉 At national level, Scottish Government raising awareness about the structures and relationships between the range of commissioned national support programmes for survivors (e.g. Future Pathways; Redress; Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/our-work/trauma-national-trauma-training-programme/>

## Challenges related to Future Pathways

Challenges related to Future Pathways were also identified, as well suggestions for improvements. These are presented below.

### Moving on from support

Survivors can feel anxious about moving on for a range of reasons, including having to wait to re-access support; a reluctance to acknowledge progress in case support is lost; long wait lists resulting in gaps in support. Practitioners can also find endings difficult, for example if there are limited options for alternative support for people to move on to. This can lead to:

- ☺ **Confusion.** Without clear endings support can become more of a chat over coffee, which is different to the support originally put in place. This can also lead to practitioners becoming attached and confuses the support relationship.
- ☺ **Inconsistent messages.** Mixed messages about endings (this included wider messages from government) can mean people might not believe that support will come to an end.
- ☺ **Less autonomy.** Some delivery partners felt that they have less autonomy to determine the length of support in their Future Pathways' contracts, which can feel disempowering.

### What does / could help:

- ☺ **Clear and consistent communications.** Messages about support timescales, boundaries and endings should be consistent and clear (from Future Pathways and delivery partners) – and provided in a range of formats to suit people's needs.
- ☺ **Planning and agreeing endings.** Concluding support can be difficult for survivors, partners and support coordinators. It's therefore essential to talk about boundaries and endings at each stage of support, so these are transparent, planned and agreed from the outset. This also helps survivors have clarity on their rights and role in decision-making when support is coming to an end - rather than feeling that the decision is being made 'for them'.
- ☺ **Different support levels.** Future Pathways might benefit from reviewing and offering different 'levels' of engagement to help people feel more comfortable moving on from 'active' support.
- ☺ **Transitions and stepping-stones.** Endings might not mean 'going it alone'. Some people may require on-going intensive support and transition to accessing statutory support services. For others, it could be about identifying options to transition to less intensive or peer support. Increasing access to peer support opportunities could help, either within Future Pathways, or by developing links with organisations offering peer support.
- ☺ **Strengths-based tools for life.** Support should be strengths-based and focus on equipping people with knowledge, skills, resources and tools they need to deal with life's inevitable ups and downs e.g. recognising triggers; self-care; identifying support networks.
- ☺ **Complementing support.** Delivery partners felt it would be helpful to have a sense of the wider network of support survivors are accessing. This would help understand where their support fits with and complements other support – and may help with practitioner anxiety about endings as they could see they are only one part of a broader support network.

### **Practice example: Collaborative and supported endings.**

Using a three-way face to face meeting to review and end support helped with transparency, consistency and ownership of the endings process. Evidence of progress was used to support decision-making and plan next steps. This helped the survivor to feel they had a supported ending and enabled the Support Coordinator and delivery partner to be clear on the process. This avoided the survivor feeling like the 'rug was being pulled from under them' when support was coming to an end.

### **Different lengths of support**

Future Pathways' person-centred, outcomes-focused approach means the type and length of support varies from person to person. This can lead to:

- 👉 **Feelings of inequity** amongst some survivors as the reason for different lengths of support is not always understood. Feelings of inequity can be particularly upsetting for survivors of in-care abuse or neglect.
- 👉 **Differing expectations** about the length of support available which means there can be a tension around ending support. This related partly to previous messages from government about 'lifelong' support, as well as Future Pathways' evolving its ways of working over the years and support contracts becoming more boundaried.

### **What does / could help:**

- 👉 **Acknowledging and addressing feelings of inequity.** It's important to acknowledge feelings of inequity and proactively address these in a psychologically informed way.
- 👉 **Illustrative case studies.** Case studies could be used (possibly animated) to show different people's support pathways, including the range and length of support.
- 👉 **Clear and consistent communications.** There is a need for consistent messages about the purpose and benefits of support being outcomes-focused (and therefore different for each person). Programme members noted that this consistency needs to come from Future Pathways; all Support Coordinators; and from delivery partner practitioners providing support.

### **Contracting processes and relationships**

The collaborative commissioning process can at times be complex with relationships between and across Support Coordinators, delivery partners and survivors. This can lead to:

- 👉 **Reporting on progress and impact** being challenging, including information in quarterly returns not being used consistently to inform contract review meetings and a lack of space in the quarterly return to capture the full impact of support. *'Completing the quarterly returns takes up a lot of our team's time, so it would be good to get feedback and for the information to be used in discussions with Support Coordinators.'*
- 👉 **Inconsistency in communications** between delivery partners and Support Coordinators at times. Differing levels of engagement between delivery partners and Support Coordinators highlight the importance of continuity and consistency to the collaborative approach to commissioning.
- 👉 **Contract extensions** without full discussion with delivery partner about the rationale and aims for the extension.
- 👉 **A focus on challenges** within discussions between delivery partners and Support Coordinators, which tend to take place when there is a need to resolve challenges. Over time this can impact morale. *'Our communications can tend to be about when something not working, rather than on the positives.'*

### What does/could help:

- 👉 **Balancing flexibility and boundaries.** Whilst the flexibility offered by Future Pathways is hugely positive, this needs to be balanced against support contract boundaries, as well as the scope of support set out by Scottish Government. Discussing and defining the parameters of the contract *flexibility helps*, for example agreeing a maximum length of support.
- 👉 **Regular collaborative discussions.** Having regular three-way meetings at different stages of support to review and celebrate progress; resolve any challenges; share learning about the impact of support; discuss and agree support boundaries.
- 👉 **Quarterly return process.** Clarifying and agreeing purpose of feedback; further developing feedback loops; gathering evidence of the wider ripple effects of support; consistently using the information in the quarterly return in conversations to develop and improve support; ensuring survivors' experiences and voices are central to the process.
- 👉 **Continuous collective learning.** Creating opportunities to bring the Future Pathways' team together with delivery partners to continue to share practice. For example delivery partner events before the pandemic were positively received, and building a community of practice in the action learning programme has been valuable. *'It would be great to continue to have opportunities to come together in a meaningful way and continue to share experiences.'*
- 👉 **Involving survivors.** Involving survivors in the design of the commissioning approach (including technical aspects, such as the quarterly returns) to ensure their voices are the heart of future developments.

#### **Practice example: Clarifying and agreeing relationship parameters.**

A delivery partner arranged a meeting with Future Pathways' colleagues to discuss and agree parameters for future commissioned support. This was really positive and helped clarify future partnership working arrangements (e.g. agreeing a minimum and maximum timeframe; planning for endings). These parameters are still flexible but give increased clarity and consistency, making it easier for the delivery partner, and for the survivor, to manage expectations and support a more positive ending to support.

## 4. Final reflections

Programme members reflected on their experience of working together during the programme and felt it had supported:

- 👉 **Proactive approaches.** Delivery partners have become more proactive in their relationship with Future Pathways. Examples included, making sure quarterly returns are submitted on time; asking for meetings with Future Pathways colleagues to discuss and agree contracting arrangements and boundaries.
- 👉 **Building understanding.** Future Pathways team members and delivery partner colleagues working together in this way has led to increased clarity on each other's role in the collaborative commissioning relationship; and improved understanding of different perspectives within the relationship and how this could help improve future support. *'The programme has been hugely helpful in gaining clarity on roles within the commissioning relationship. It has really highlighted how valuable and important a community of practice is.'*
- 👉 **Sharing knowledge with colleagues.** Delivery partners have shared information from the programme with their colleagues to ensure they know about the support offered by Future Pathways.
- 👉 **Collective learning.** Members noted that they have learned a lot from each other, and that it had been hugely valuable to have such open and honest conversations. They felt it would be important to have opportunities to continue these conversations in future. *'We need to have more conversations like this. Having time to go back into our own organisations and apply the learning from Future Pathways in our own contracts.'*

Programme discussions have served to highlight the value of the collaborative approach to commissioning taken by Future Pathways. As facilitator I have been struck by the alignment of this approach with the five key principles of trauma-informed practice<sup>3</sup>, not just as it relates to Future Pathways and delivery partner support for survivors, but more broadly in the commissioning relationships between Future Pathways and delivery partners. As the learning in this report shows, the Future Pathways approach to commissioning is more than transactional. This relational approach allows all parties to build trust, offer choice, fully utilise their strengths, skills and experience, and share power. This approach was regularly commended as unique, and the trusting relationships between Future Pathways and delivery partners were apparent during the programme, with members sharing their experiences of working in this way openly, honestly and respectfully.

As the first alliancing partnership in Scotland, as well as one of the first services of its kind internationally<sup>4</sup>, Future Pathways has, and continues to, generate a wealth of valuable learning and experience. This learning can not only benefit organisations and practitioners supporting those who have experienced trauma, but also has valuable application to inform commissioning approaches more broadly.

Whilst the approach is not without its challenges, suggestions for improvement offer a number of potential areas for development, some of which are already being actively considered. Moreover, programme learning has shown working in this way can be complex. It takes an investment of time to build trust, and most importantly a genuine commitment to collaborate and share power. As one programme member noted, it is more than money, it is the philosophy of empowerment and collaboration embodied in Future Pathways' approach to commissioning that is key.

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<sup>3</sup> *Trauma Informed Practice: A Toolkit for Scotland, Scottish Government*

<sup>4</sup> *Interrogating assumptions about the relationship between service providers and recipients: learning from a new service for survivors of in-care abuse, Cook, A, Morton S, and Henderson, F.*