

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Health Scrutiny Committee – 21 July 2021

**Subject:** Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) & Trauma Informed Practice

**Report of:** Director of Public Health

---

**Summary**

This report gives an overview of how the MCC Population Health team is leading the work to fulfil the ambition of Manchester being an ACE-aware, trauma informed and trauma responsive city by 2025. A city with a co-ordinated approach to reducing exposure to ACEs, where all practitioners work with residents to prevent or mitigate the consequences of trauma; helping children, families, and communities to build resilience; and improve outcomes for residents by working in a trauma responsive way.

**Recommendations**

The Health Scrutiny Committee are invited to;

1. Consider and comment on the information in the report.
  2. Endorse the approach, continue to support trauma informed and trauma responsive practice, and promote it wherever possible.
  3. Invite the project team back in June/July 2022 to update on progress.
- 

**Wards Affected: All**

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The Our Manchester strategy is underpinned in the work demonstrated in this report. One of the key principles of the ACEs and Trauma Informed ambition is to develop thriving communities leading to better health outcomes across the city. This is being achieved by delivering training to upskill key stakeholders, partner organisations and communities; with subsequent work supporting the application of learning into practice. OM values are underpinned through the work in that stakeholders own it and are proud and passionate about the
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	

A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	projects, residents and communities. We are listening to the needs of our population, working collaboratively, and building relationships using strength-based conversations. This ensures that communities are put at the centre of activity and that the work evolves to meet their needs.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

**Contact Officers:**

Name: Gareth Nixon  
Position: Programme Lead: ACEs & Trauma Informed Practice  
Telephone: 07508 003525  
E-mail: gareth.nixon@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Lauren Harwood  
Position: Project Manager: ACEs & Trauma Informed Practice  
Telephone: 07825 706987  
E-mail: lauren.harwood@manchester.gov.uk

**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) describe a wide range of stressful or traumatic experiences that can occur from conception to the age of 18 – they include abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. It is important to sit this alongside societal issues, so we refer to a pair of ACEs to include Adverse Community Environments like poverty, discrimination, poor housing, lack of economic opportunity and social connectedness. Over the last 16 months the impact of Covid-19 has been a trauma for all of us and has exacerbated existing inequalities. By addressing adversity in society communities are less likely to experience chronic stress and more likely to have their basic needs met; thus, resulting in lowered adverse childhood experiences and increased resilience.
- 1.2 When children are exposed to adverse and stressful experiences, it can have a long-lasting impact on their ability to think, interact with others and on their learning.
- 1.3 It has been shown that considerable and prolonged stress in childhood has life-long consequences for a person's health and well-being, with negative behaviours often being used unconsciously as protective solutions to unrecognised problems dating back to childhood.
- 1.4 ACEs are common in the UK with nearly 50% of people having experienced at least one ACE, whilst 9%-12% have experienced 4 or more ACEs. There is a dose response relationship between ACEs and the development of poor physical, mental, and behavioural health. Experiencing 4 or more ACEs is associated with significantly increased risk for 7 out of 10 leading causes of death in adulthood: heart disease, stroke, cancer, COPD, diabetes, Alzheimer's, and suicide.
- 1.5 By building resilience in communities and adopting trauma informed approaches we can prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences, enhance child and family wellbeing, and mitigate against the trauma our communities have/are experiencing.
- 1.6 Key to building resilience is to put in place as many protective factors as possible to enable children to eat well, sleep well, exercise well; whilst promoting positive activities wherever possible including arts, culture, sport, mindfulness and social connectedness. This is underpinned by ensuring there is secure attachment with a primary care giver.
- 1.7 The fundamental question behind being trauma informed is to look behind someone's presenting behaviour and ask, 'what's happened to you', rather than 'what's wrong with you' or 'why are you doing/behaving like that'. The core principles of a trauma informed approach are to be aware of trauma; promote safety and trust with residents/service users; offer choice and collaboration; and build on strengths and skills.

- 1.8 This report will outline the journey that Manchester is on to become an ACE aware, trauma informed and trauma responsive City. It will detail what activity has taken place, illustrate current work and set out plans to achieve our ambition of improved health and wellbeing for our individuals, families and communities.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Manchester City Council through its Reform and Innovation team undertook a 12-month pilot in Harpurhey between September 2018 and August 2019 testing whether having a trauma informed workforce at place level engages service users/people with lived experience in a different way. Our framing question was 'Does a deeper level of engagement and understanding of the root causes of behaviour, rather than treating 'presenting' behaviours, make the current intervention offer work more effectively and lead to better outcomes for residents?'
- 2.2 All public and VCS services who provide operational frontline delivery in Harpurhey were trained, coached and developed to offer a trauma informed approach. The work was of a true multi-agency nature and included staff from Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Early Help, Education (nursery, primary, secondary and further), GM Police, Housing Associations, Manchester Local Care Organisation, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, Neighbourhood Directorates, Voluntary and Community sector and Youth Justice
- 2.3 The evaluation of the pilot highlighted the benefits of this approach including positive outcomes for residents; staff thinking differently, multi-agency engagement, an increase in staff wellbeing, and a tangible impact in sectors including cost savings.
- 2.4 A paper and presentation were delivered to full Council in October 2019 detailing the findings from the evaluation and outlining next steps. The Council endorsed the approach of becoming a trauma informed City.

## **3.0 Update**

- 3.1 The ACEs and trauma informed work is embedded into mainstream provision within the Population Health team; included in the city-wide Covid recovery plan and is one of the key principles of the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership. During some of 2020 the work took a backseat as the Programme Lead, Gareth Nixon, was involved in supporting communities through the Covid-19 mutual aid support hub.
- 3.2 In February 2021 Lauren Harwood was appointed as the Project Manager for ACEs and trauma work. Gareth and Lauren are delivering ACEs and trauma informed training across the City; and are working with organisations and sectors to implement the learning in their core practice. Trauma informed approaches cut across all services; however our update primarily focuses on activities within the health sector.

## **4.0 What we are doing**

### **4.1 Primary Care**

Our strong links with primary care led to ACEs and trauma becoming part of the GP training standards in 20-21, with over 300 GPs viewing the training video <https://app.frame.io/presentations/9e5c243f-132a-4d1e-be95-454ef6bb899c>

Alongside this we have trained all the staff in the Arch Medical Practice (Hulme), Ashcroft Surgery (Levenshulme) and the West Gorton Medical Practice.

We are working with the West Gorton Medical Practice to implement trauma informed and trauma responsive approaches with the patient community. Initial findings suggest that this approach really helps in interactions and consultations with patients; and allows better identification and support for families to try to reduce the possible 'toxic stress' burden on patients.

Working with Ruth Bromley (Chair of the Manchester Health & Care Commissioning Board) we are developing a strategy for primary care with a focus on prevention, building capacity in practice and including ACE and trauma in medical student training.

### **4.2 Health Visiting**

Training has been delivered to staff in North Manchester and is being rolled out across Manchester with an emphasis of strength-based conversations with families.

### **4.3 Midwifery**

We are piloting foundational training in September, facilitated by community matrons, and co-delivered with our health visitor champions who include the specialist leads in Perinatal and Infant Mental Health and Midwifery Liaison/CONI (Care of Next Infant).

### **4.4 GM Mental Health**

We are discussing with the GMHH trauma informed care lead how we can use the expertise at the trust's Recovery Academy e.g., to deliver a Compassionate Leadership course. We also plan to work together to deliver training to staff at Park House, North Manchester General Hospital.

### **4.5 i-Thrive**

In partnership with Manchester Art Gallery, we have been delivering an Art of Resilience programme with two primary schools. This is being extended to 8 schools over the next 12 months with funding from the GM Violence Reduction Unit. The Manchester i-Thrive programme manager for Arts, Culture and

Mental Health is on the working group. We are meeting in September to set up a health and wellbeing group and to discuss further use of Manchester Art Gallery in promoting good mental health.

#### **4.6 Pennine Care**

Gareth Nixon is a member of the GMCA ACEs and Trauma steering group supporting the implementation of a GM framework. A key part of which is to increase access to the GM Resilience Hub for practitioners requiring support with/referral pathways for residents who have complex trauma.

#### **4.7 Education**

We deliver termly sessions on ACEs and Trauma as part of the Healthy Schools Behind the Behaviour programme – a multi-agency offer designed to increase awareness and understanding of a range of mental and emotional health problems for professionals and front-line staff working with children and young people. In the 20-21 academic year over 150 staff participated in the course.

All the Healthy Schools team (included school nurses) have been trained, and our training content is incorporated into the Healthy Schools mental health awareness courses. To develop an expertise amongst the school community we have funded 7 teachers (6 primary + 1 secondary) to undertake a Diploma in Mental Health and Trauma delivered by Trauma Informed Schools UK.

#### **4.8 Neighbourhoods**

The pandemic has had a profound effect on the residents and communities within our City. We are continuing to deliver training on a multi-agency footprint in localities – the training includes discussion of Covid-19 as a trauma. We are also developing Community Hubs across the City to support our communities and reduce anxieties as we come out of the pandemic. In partnership with the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams at the Manchester Local Care Organisation, and our voluntary sector providers, we are establishing Hubs in Blackley, Cheetham Hill and Wythenshawe this summer. We have an ambition to have at least one Community Hub in each of our neighbourhoods.

We are implementing Hub and Spokes models to encourage residents to access safe and welcoming spaces using existing community assets. Positive activities are being promoted and communities are being consulted to tell us what activities they want to access. The intention is to support residents of all ages, and families, to improve their physical and mental well-being; build confidence; encourage social connectedness and reduce isolation; promote mindfulness and provide access to arts, culture, sports and leisure opportunities.

The Hubs can also act as peer support networks to bring together people with shared experiences, provide a space where individuals feel accepted and

understood; and where everyone's experiences are seen as being equally important.

Activities that residents have told us they are interested in include yoga, knit & natter, coffee mornings, well-being walks, photography, gardening and singing. We will work with the voluntary sector to ensure the offer adds value to, rather than duplicating, existing activity. It is important that we also support our communities to meet their basic needs of food, fuel, housing, and clothing; so alongside these positive activities there will be access to support agencies.

Once staff at the Hubs have built a trusted relationship with residents there will be an opportunity to link in with other agencies who can offer more therapeutic interventions such as Manchester MIND and Manchester Women's Aid.

Our Hubs will be complementary to the M-Thrive provision that seeks to provide a single point of entry to Manchester's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health offer. We are involved in the M-Thrive implementation groups and are ensuring that trauma informed, and trauma responsive approaches are part of the core offer.

We will also link into the wellbeing hubs being established by the NHS Foundation Trust.

#### **4.9 Manchester City Council**

An ambition is for Manchester City Council to be a trauma informed organisation. To achieve this, we will roll-out a training programme to all staff (a mix of face-to-face and virtual delivery) with training tailored so that the information is contextual – this is being piloted with our Homelessness Directorate in autumn 2021.

We will also develop and implement an ACEs Best Practice Hub - a digital front door for staff to access once in receipt of training where they can access further resources, guidance, and toolkits. Building on the self-care workshops delivered by Steve Brock (MCC Social Work consultant) this will include resources on how we can stay physically and mentally well. It is so important we look after ourselves before we can support others.

#### **4.10 Other Sectors**

We continue to work with colleagues in housing, criminal justice, social care, and the voluntary sector to enable the implementation of trauma informed approaches.

#### **4.11 Champions**

In each sector we are developing staff to act as a champion in their organisation and work with the programme lead to enable their organisation to become trauma informed and trauma responsive. They will also be expected to co-deliver training courses in an external organisation at least twice a year

and become part of a Community of Practice to share good practice and evidence impact of applying the learning into practice.

#### 4.12 **How will we know we have succeeded?**

There is a debate as to whether you ever truly become a trauma informed City – it is a continual process. However, there are milestones we can put in place by 2025 that will illustrate a cultural shift and systemic change. These include:

-

- All MCC staff to have received ACEs and trauma informed training
- Trauma informed practice to be included in the MCC on-boarding process and included in inductions in other sectors e.g., the Police
- A Best Practice Hub to be established for MCC staff
- Establish at least one trauma responsive community hub in each of our neighbourhoods
- Increase our team of Champions to extend the reach across the City
- Implement the Primary Care strategy
- Evaluate impact, including cost benefit analysis, and tell the stories
- Work with GM to produce a portal to share good practice and resources
- Increased use of the GM Resilience Hub.

### 5.0 **Summary**

5.1 We need to continue to raise awareness of trauma and adversity; build capacity across sectors to enable them to adopt a trauma-informed and responsive approach; focus on child and family centred early intervention; build resilient communities; and encourage services to be kind and compassionate.

5.2 If we can do this, we can achieve our ambition of Manchester being a trauma informed and trauma responsive City.

*'There comes a point when we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they are falling in.'* Desmond Tutu

### 6.0 **Recommendations**

6.1 The Health Scrutiny Committee to endorse the approach and invite the project team back in June/July 2022 to update on progress.