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Co-production and
Involvement at Turn2us:
The Framework

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Review due on: 13th January 2022

Introduction to the framework

Why we co-produce our work at Turn2us

We co-produce at Turn2us because doing so brings another form of insight into our work- lived expertise. Moreover, the combination of professional expertise, data and lived expertise gives us the power to meaningfully challenge the system that traps people in poverty. Designing and delivering services with people who have a direct experience of poverty means we will learn more about the issue. This in turn will increase the effectiveness and innovation of our work, driving ever high impact for those who use our services.

Why we have developed this framework and toolkit

We have developed this framework and toolkit so we have a strong foundation from which to do co-production. Having a purpose, principles and ways of measuring our work makes us more accountable to both our co-production partners and to those for which the services are designed. Having a practical toolkit to guide staff will make our involvement work more effective, as the more resources available, the better embedded co-production practices can become across the organisation. Furthermore, these documents contribute to the institutional memory of Turn2us, ensuring we record our thinking and processes around co-production, to help us build on them in the future. We must embed co-production as *the* approach to working at Turn2us. It should become a lens we see our work through, valuing lived expertise alongside the insight sources we already use to guide us- professional expertise and data.

How we developed it

A team of six (three Turn2us staff and three co-production partners) carried out the project from July 2020 to January 2021. We chose to structure the process of building up a framework around the guidance from the popular [4Pi National Standards on Involvement](#), designed by the National Survivor User Network. The standards have over 100 signatories and provide a clear structure on how to approach such a project. 4Pi stands for Purpose, Process, Presence, Principles, and Impact. It was these five themes that drove our thinking, and we held workshops on each with staff and co-production partners.

What is in the framework and toolkit?

In the framework, there are three of the four 'Ps': presence, purpose, and principles, as well as the I, impact. The toolkit looks at the final P, process. This framework and its accompanying toolkit provide the blueprint of what co-production looks like at Turn2us, and how to do it. Whilst the framework explores the thinking behind our approach, the toolkit has practical resources and guidance to help involve people in your work. Alongside support from the Co-production Officer, these documents should guide staff and stimulate their thinking on how best to involve people with a lived experience of financial hardship.

Purpose

Firstly, we defined the purpose of co-production at Turn2us, seeking to clarify two questions:

- why are we involving people in Turn2us' work?
- and why should people want to be involved?

We used the strategic purpose of Turn2us as a guide, to ensure that our reasons for involving people in our work will help us to achieve our overall mission. The strategic purpose of Turn2us is as follows:

So people can build financial sustainability and thrive, Turn2us gives people the information and support they need in the face of life-changing events, and collaborates to tackle the causes and symptoms of poverty.

Based on this strategic purpose, we defined the following purpose for co-production at Turn2us:

We co-produce our work, so that we learn from one another, and so that we can combine the power of Turn2us with the collective power of people with lived experience

To learn from one another

Firstly, we co-produce our work, so that we can learn from one another. When we learn from one another, through an on-going and two-way process, we can more deeply understand what information and support people need. We can also understand how Turn2us is best able to support people.

This helps Turn2us to meet its strategic purpose of *“giving people the information and support they need”* and helps us to increase the effectiveness and impact for people who use our services.

To combine our power

Secondly, we co-produce our work, so that we can combine our different sources of power. By combining the power of our professional knowledge and capabilities with our lived experience and expertise, we increase our ability to meaningfully tackle the causes and symptoms of poverty. We also strengthen our collective ability to challenge the systems which trap people in poverty.

This helps Turn2us to meet its strategic purpose of *“collaborating to tackle the causes and symptoms of poverty”*. By collaborating, and combining the power of Turn2us as an organisation, with the power of people with lived experience of poverty, we will increase our chances of tackling the causes and symptoms of poverty.

Definition of co-production and involvement and types of involvement we use

Definition of co-production

At Turn2us, we define co-production as working alongside people with lived expertise to design and deliver services that affect them. We refer to people with lived expertise as Co-production Partners.

There are four main types of involvement that we use at Turn2us, which are based on Shelly Arnstein's popular 'Ladder of Involvement'. These are summarised in Table 1 below. The main differences between the four types of involvement are based on two factors:

1. The extent to which Turn2us shares decision-making with Co-production Partners
2. The extent to which we build relationships and learn from each other

Table 1: Types of Involvement we use at Turn2us

| WHICH TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT? | WHAT IS IT? WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE? | HOW DO WE SHARE DECISION MAKING? | HOW DO WE LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER? |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p>CO-PRODUCTION</p> <p>is done <i>with</i> co-production partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project with a shared vision and goal, that has been decided with co-production partners from the outset. • A partnership of equals in which everyone's input has the same value. • All decisions are made jointly. • Co-production partners are involved throughout the process, from conception, through design to delivery. | <p>Decision making is shared equally throughout.</p> | <p>Knowledge learned from co-production steers the project's direction and determines its delivery.</p> <p>Learning is a two-way process, where everyone is able to ask questions and bring items for discussion.</p> |
| <p>CO-DESIGN</p> <p>is done <i>with</i> co-production partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project in which you work with co-production partners towards the same vision and goal. • A partnership of equals in which everyone's input has the same value. • Co-production partners are involved throughout the design and all design decisions are made jointly. • The implementation and delivery of the service rests with Turn2us staff, but staff are guided by the input of co-production partners. | <p>Decision making is shared equally during design but not conception or delivery.</p> | <p>Knowledge learned from co-design steers the project's direction and informs its delivery.</p> <p>Learning is a two-way process, where everyone is able to ask questions and bring items for discussion.</p> |
| <p>ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>is done <i>for</i> co-production partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You decide on your project and its goal before any involvement from co-production partners. • While designing your project you bring in lived expertise by regularly inviting co-production partners to express their views in various ways. • You choose whether co-production partner's lived expertise influences the decisions you make. | <p>Some decision-making opportunities are shared, but the ultimate choice is made by staff</p> | <p>Knowledge learned from engagement can influence decisions during the project if you so decide.</p> <p>Learning is a primarily a one-way process, with Turn2us staff primarily asking the questions and setting the topics for</p> |

| | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|--|
| | | | discussion. |
| <p>CONSULTATION</p> <p>is done <i>for</i> co-production partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You decide on your project and its goal before any involvement from co-production partners. • You gather information by inviting co-production partners to fill in surveys or attend meetings to say which proposal they prefer or what they think about an issue. • You draw conclusions and make decisions based on the knowledge you learn. • There is no discussion with co-production partners on how their opinions might alter your project. • The knowledge you learn is limited by the scope of the questions you decide to ask. | Decision making is not shared. | <p>Knowledge learned from consultation can influence your decisions if you so decide and is limited to what you decide to ask.</p> <p>Learning is a primarily a one-way process, with Turn2us staff primarily asking the questions and setting the topics for discussion</p> |

While our aspiration at Turn2us is that co-production becomes a part of everything that we do, it may not always be possible to fully co-produce all our work, due to constraints of time and resources.

Each of the four types of involvement can help Turn2us to achieve different outcomes. It is important to understand the differences between the four types of involvement, so that you can make the most appropriate choice for a specific project or situation. There is a guide exploring the differences in more detail in the toolkit.

Principles

We have four main principles that will guide all our co-production and involvement work. It is the responsibility of the project lead to ensure these principles are shown to all participants during a project. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure they are followed.

The four main principles that will guide our co-production work are:

- Working in safe spaces
- Making our work actionable, transparent, and accountable
- Being inclusive and equitable
- Responding to the adaptable nature of co-production

Working in safe spaces

Psychological safety is crucial to effective co-production because, without it, people may not feel they can share their lived experiences with us. Moreover, if people feel they can speak openly, we mitigate against issues of harm going unreported.

To ensure that we all work in safe spaces, we will:

- Listen to all co-production partners with respect and openness
- Understand that there is no 'right answer'; no 'monopoly on truth'
- Accept consensus decisions if everyone does not agree
- Take people as they are, focusing on 'enabling' rather than 'disabling', accepting different points of view and not being mean, aggressive, dismissive, or belittling
- Be focused on and present in the process, minimising distractions.
- Have self-awareness of how our behaviour may affect communicating with others
- Run co-production meetings in a structured and focused way, with the appropriate strategies in place to manage imbalances, disruptions, and conflicts.

Making our work actionable, transparent, and accountable

Making our work actionable, transparent, and accountable is critical for quality co-production as it means there is purpose and integrity to our work. Without it, we risk wasting resources and people's valuable time.

To ensure that we make our work actionable, transparent, and accountable, we will:

- Create actions and initiatives as a result of co-production so it isn't a 'tick box exercise' or 'talking shop'
- Communicate clearly, effectively, and transparently, using plain English and avoiding jargon.
- Keep records of meetings, decisions made, and changes made/new initiatives developed as a result
- Measure the impact of co-production work and review progress regularly.
- Ensure all co-production partners are aware of our complaints mechanisms, which we detail in our joining guide.

Being inclusive and equitable

Our work must be inclusive and equitable. If we do not approach co-production with an awareness of the structural oppression of minority groups, we accept that system.

To ensure that we are inclusive and equitable, we will:

- Strive for equity, treating everyone according to their individual needs with the aim of levelling up
- Challenge privilege in a meaningful way, speaking openly to the fact that race, class and disability are some of the most important factors in causing financial hardship
- Have diverse groups of people co-producing with us
- Adopt an open-minded approach towards cultural differences and diversity in ways of working, being sensitive to language/formats used and different ways of expressing/doing things
- Make participation and information about outcomes and/or published materials accessible to everyone
- Give all participants an equal say and value, even when we don't agree with one another
- Acknowledge and speak openly about power differences (for instance, between staff and co-production partners or between different levels of Turn2us staff)
- Avoid tokenism-appearance versus substance

Responding to the adaptable nature of co-production

It is important for us to remember that co-production is an evolving concept for Turn2us, and we need to be flexible as we grow in to an organisation where it is an embedded practice.

Co-production:

- Can be done in many ways – there is no 'one size fits all'
- Is a never ending learning process and 'work in progress'
- May be subject to change over time and according to circumstances/needs.

To ensure that we always respond to the adaptable nature of co-production, we will:

- Be open to learning from one another and developing new ways of working
- Change in response to co-production work
- Adapt to changing circumstances, priorities and events that affect co-production and Turn2us's work.

Presence

Who do we want to co-produce with?

We want to co-produce with people who have a recent (within the last 2 years) or current lived experience of poverty, financial hardship or receiving benefits. This must be a representative mix of people, with a focus on single parent households, geographic location, and all nine protected characteristics¹, as we know these demographics have a particular impact on people being more vulnerable to poverty.

How will we be accountable to these standards?

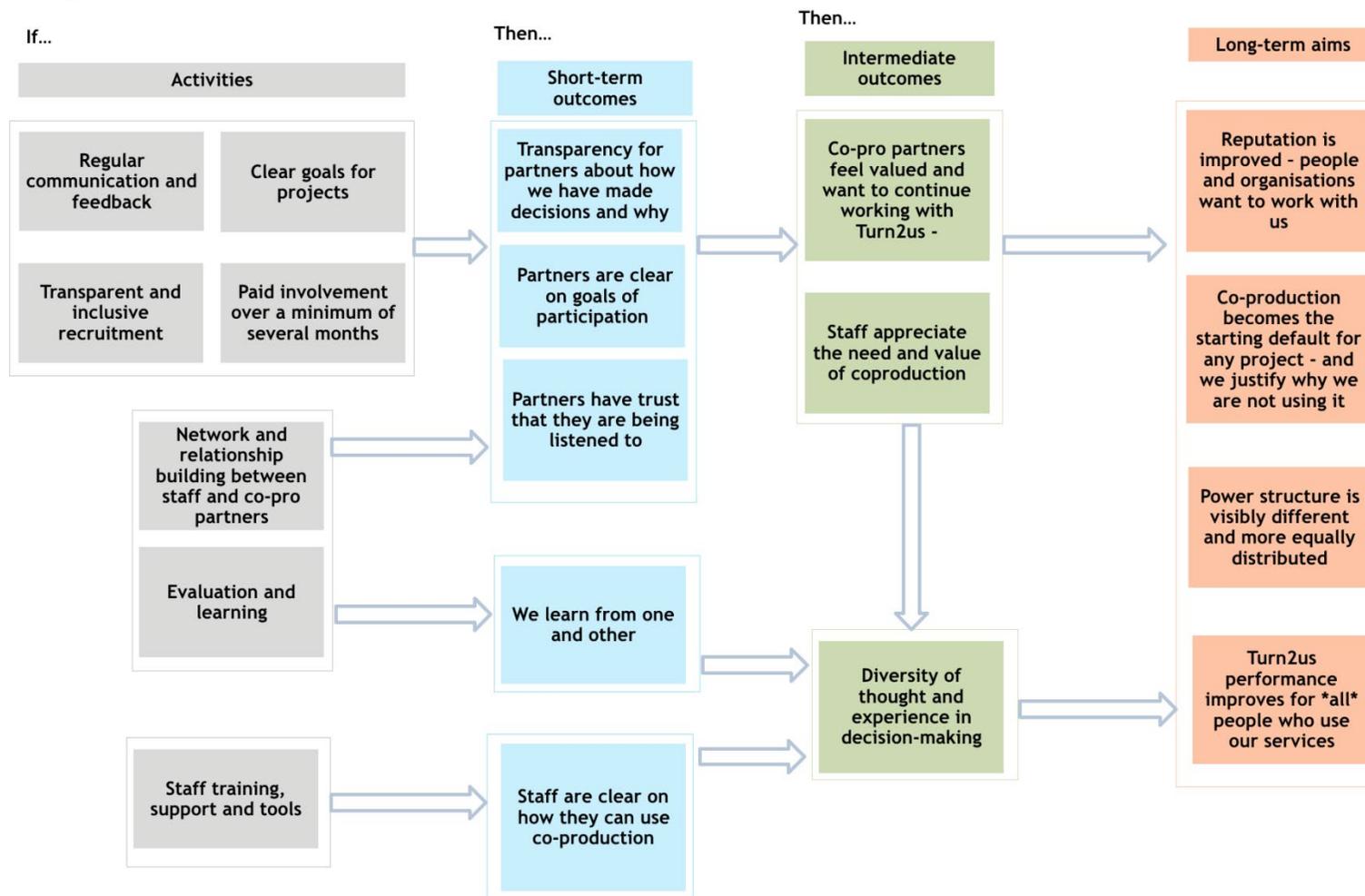
We will collect and monitor anonymous data on our co-production partners. This will be an iterative process, conducting targeted recruitment of certain groups of people if we see they are underrepresented in our work. In our evaluations of co-production and involvement projects, we will document how representative the group was and make this available for the group and all staff to see.

¹ Under the Equality Act (2010), there are nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

Impact

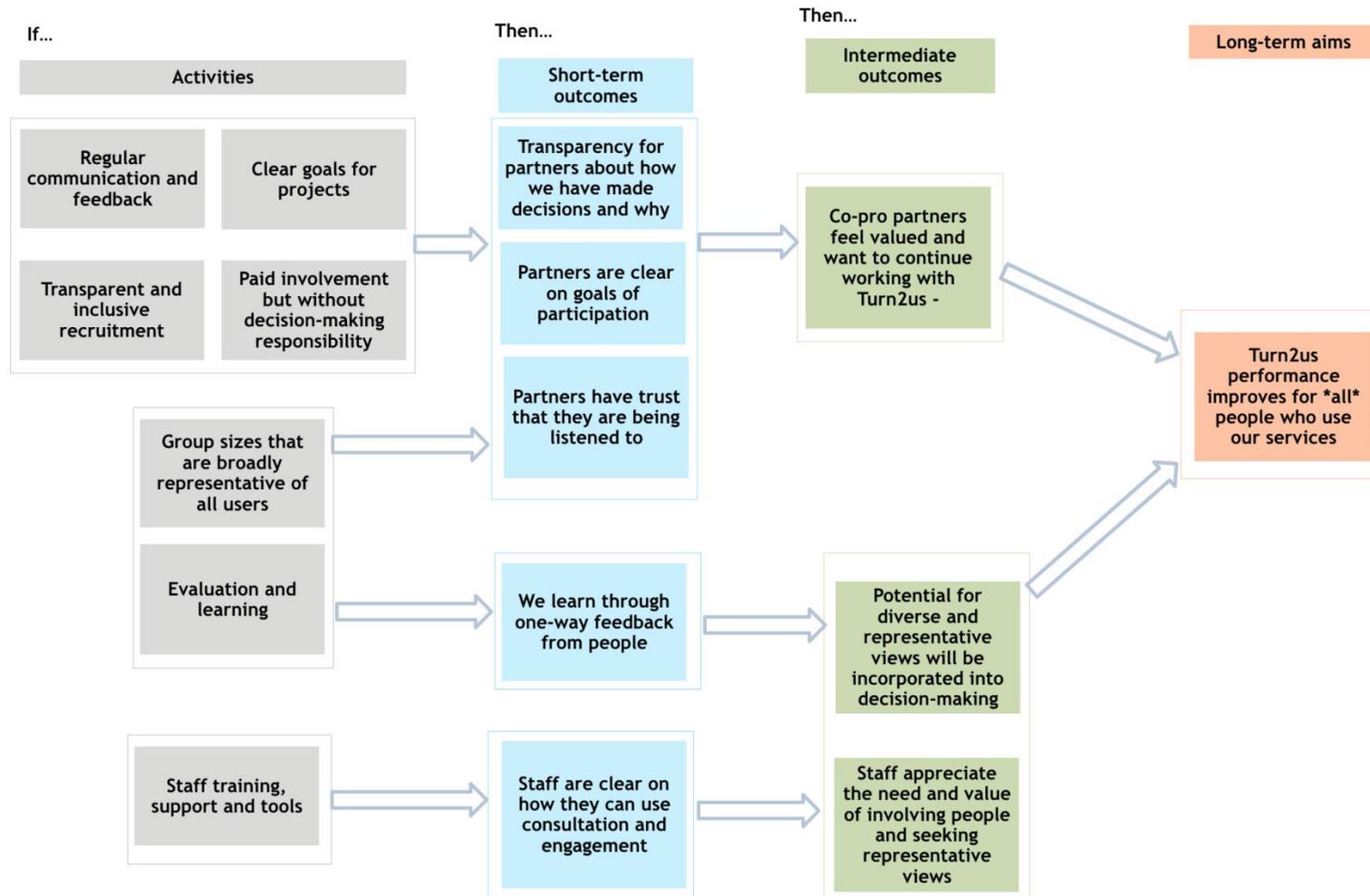
In the logic models below, our outcomes and aims are outlined for the different types of involvement we do at Turn2us (Co-production and Co-design, and Engagement and Consultation). We will evaluate whether we are meeting our outcomes and aims through surveys, and interviews with staff and co-production partners.

Co-production and Co-design Logic Model



Measuring impact

Consultation and Engagement Logic Model



Appendix: How we created the framework

This section will explain how the working group put this framework and toolkit together.

Who we are

The working group was formed of six people.

Abby Meadows



Abby has been the Co-production and Participation Officer at Turn2us since December 2019. Before that, she worked with people seeking asylum in Liverpool and Calais, France. She likes to write, dance and laugh in her spare time.

Filipa do Carmo



Filipa is a single mother living in London with her 5-year-old daughter. She has received support from Turn2us in the past and has participated in co-production projects since November 2019. In her spare time, she makes amigurumi toys for her daughter and friends. Pre-covid, she really enjoyed going to gigs, live performances and exhibitions. Now she relies on Netflix.

Elena Dickie



Elena has been a caseworker at Turn2us for 10 years. More recently, as a consequence of the Covid pandemic, she has been seconded to the Response Team, to create and coordinate our response to the effect of the pandemic on the UK population. Originally from Italy, she has lived in Wales for many years. In her spare time, she likes yoga, reiki, dogs, food, books and a good blanket.

Karen Isaac



Karen lives in Kent, and has been working with Turn2Us for almost 2 years now, doing volunteering and then co-production. She has learned how valuable her lived expertise is through this process. Her pastimes are walking her dog, drawing and local history.

Bridget McCall



Bridget has been at Turn2us for over 12 years, working on the website and Grants Search as the Information Specialist. Most of her career has been in the charity sector and she has also written three health books. Having experienced financial hardship herself, she knows first hand how important co-production is. She loves photography, art, reading, swimming and going to the theatre.

Brian Merry



Brian is an artist, designer, uncle, son, actor, friend, teacher and grower of veg. He also feels privileged to be a coproduction partner with Turn2Us, sharing the insight he gained from former, darker days to help shape brighter, better days for others.

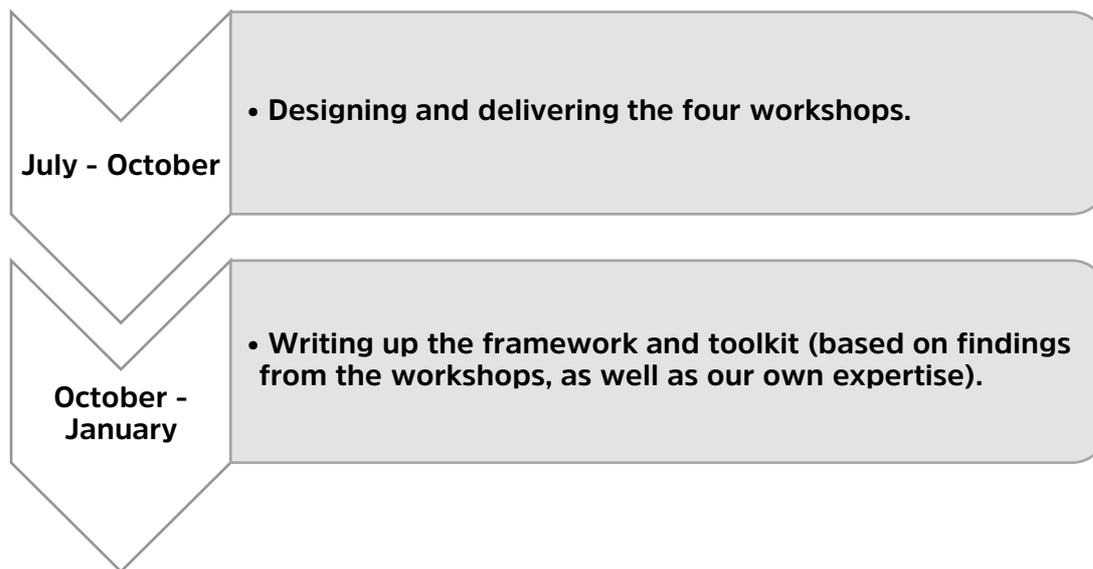
What we did

Following the [4pi National Involvement Standards](#) from the National Survivor User Network (NSUN), the working group designed and delivered four workshops. Around twenty additional staff and co-production partners attended each workshop and we thank them all for their valuable contributions.

The workshops were devised around the following key areas:

- Principles
- Purpose
- Process and Presence
- Impact

Brief timeline of work schedule



Working in co-production

The Co-production Officer (Abby) had the most paid time to spend on the project, as well as ultimate responsibility for driving it forwards. So she completed a sizable chunk of the workload and in turn had responsibility for bringing decisions to the group. Whilst Abby drove the project forwards, other team members took ownership for completing specific tasks and lots of decisions were made collectively. There wasn't a set system for this, rather, team members offered to take the lead on something 'as and when'. We worked in smaller subgroups to complete certain tasks.

With regards to the workshops, the team tried sharing the different roles out in an equitable way which played to everyone's strengths, e.g. some team members were more comfortable note taking, whilst others preferred to facilitate.

Limitations

Representation

Whilst we had a good representation of gender, ethnicity, ability and lived experience of financial hardship across the workshop attendees, the working group were all white, and mostly female. This was acknowledged early on in the group meetings. There was better representation in terms of ethnicity and gender in attendees of the workshops.

Time

There wasn't always as much time as we would have wanted to dig deeper in to certain themes. Similarly, the co-production partners were paid for a set amount of hours and that limited how much they could contribute. We did add more budget to increase their hours as what we had initially budgeted for was not enough.

Glossary of terms

Co-production

Co-production is working alongside people with lived expertise to design and deliver services that affect them.

Consensus

Consensus is a generally accepted agreement to do something among a group of people. This may involve people supporting a decision that doesn't include everything they want in the best interest of the 'whole' project.

Diversity

Diversity is making sure that you include individuals/organisations representing different types of people in terms of factors relevant to the service being provided or discussed. This might include nationality, ethnicity, religion, family, disability, financial situation, background, sexual orientation and gender.

Equity

Equity involves distributing resources based on the needs of the participants, so that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin, disability or family background, are not obstacles to accessing services and/or participating in initiatives.

Equitable measures

Equitable measures means strategies to address barriers to accessing services and/or participating in initiatives that people might meet because of personal or social circumstances, such as gender, ethnic origin, disability or family background.

Inclusion

Inclusion means providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be left out. For example, it might involve providing a non-digital version of application forms or a telephone helpline for people who don't have access to the internet

Logic Model

A logic model is a diagram which shows the proposed actions, and what outcomes we think will happen as a result and how we get there.

Plain English

Plain English is writing that helps the reader to understand the message the first time they read it. It uses short, clear sentences, everyday words and avoids jargon. See the Plain English Campaign website for more information - <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk>

Power Differences

Power differences refer to the different and sometime unequal amounts of power that people have in a relationship of any kind. Examples might include those between a

doctor and a patient, a teacher and a student or different levels of employees in an organisation.

Power Dynamics

Power dynamics refers to the way people or groups relate to each other and how power affects the relationship. This is particularly important to consider where one person or group has more power than the other. Examples might include a teacher and student, parent and child or doctor and patient.

Privilege

Privilege is a special, often unearned, right, advantage or immunity granted or available to particular people or groups that others do not have. It is often used to describe something that a dominant person or group has that those from marginalised groups do not have, such as 'white privilege' or 'male dominance'.

Safe spaces

A safe space is a space where a group of people can meet and everyone in that group can feel confident they won't experience any type of harm, such as harassment or discrimination.

Tokenism

Tokenism is doing something to make it appear that you are being fair and including all types of people and/or issues when this is not true. Examples might include hiring a woman or a person of a particular ethnic background just to avoid criticism of being sexist/racist, rather than because of their experience, background and other factors not related to her sex/ethnic background.