COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

2020/21

MAKING IT HAPPEN IN Chorley

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Chorley Council

Overview

Community resilience is about working systematically to strengthen the capacity of a community – enabling people to steer themselves towards the future that they choose. It recognises that everyone has assets that can help them and their communities, but that some need greater support because they face more barriers to achieving their goal.

Improving community resilience is important. It has the potential to improve the health, wellbeing and outcomes of our residents, as well as reducing demand on public services over the long term.

It requires a change in relationships between individuals, communities and public services. This framework sets out the approach that will be taken to achieve that change.

Community resilience is built primarily through relationships, not just between members of the community but also between organisations, specifically between the voluntary sector, the local economy and the public sector.

The cause of low resilience is not an individual issue and although economic factors are relevant, they are not the sole factor in ensuing resilience.

A focus on working across sectors to increase resilience is always needed but is particularly important in times of public funding cuts and reduced services, change to the unemployment landscape, rising inequalities and the cost of living. Building community resilience will improve the wellbeing of our residents and provide the potential to reduce demand on costly public services.

A framework will provide direction and set out the approach required to help us to achieve better outcomes and raise resilience of individuals and communities.

The framework will be a key tool for the council and will guide the principles and approaches used to understand and support communities across the borough.

We will work with our partners to adopt the same principles and approaches across all public services working in the borough to improve social outcomes.

Links to Corporate Strategy and Public Service Reform Partnership
The community resilience framework will support the delivery of the council's Corporate Strategy. Specifically, it will support the following priorities:
- An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of its residents and the local area
- Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all
- Clean, safe healthy homes and communities

It will also support the delivery of the Chorley Public Service Reform Board's vision:
> By 2020, we will have high quality public services which provide value for money and the best outcomes for the residents of Chorley.
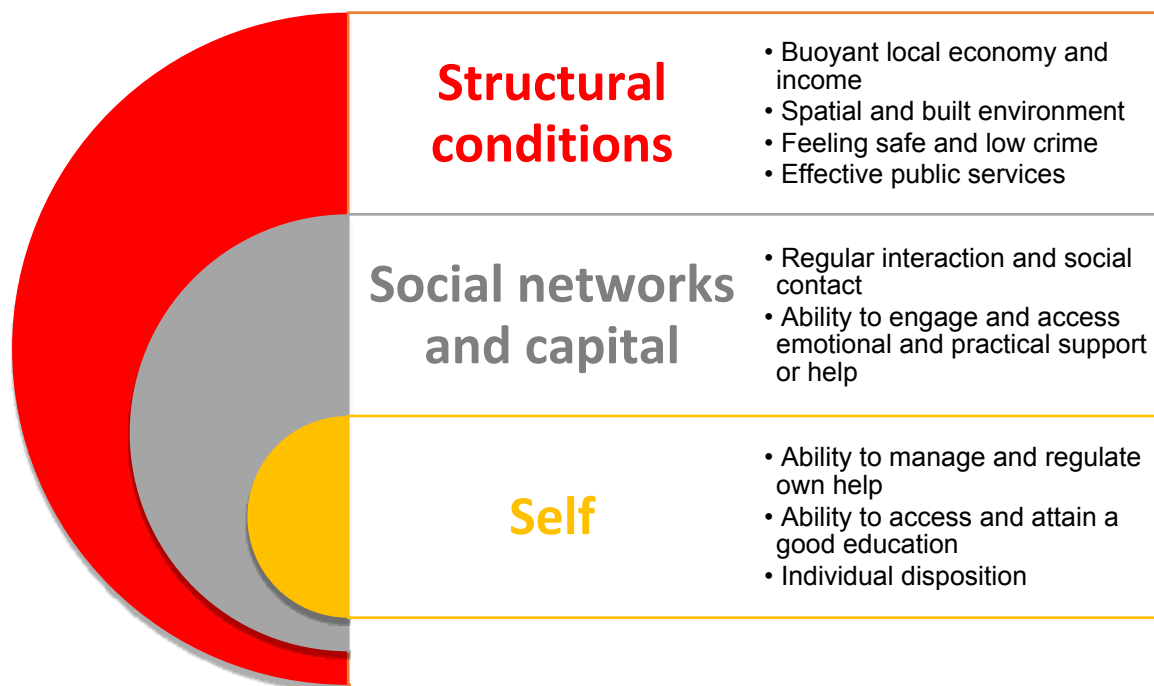
Objectives
Some of the broad over-arching objectives our work will seek to achieve are:
- Ensuring assets and resource is available to support communities adapt and mange a gradual change

- Encouraging activism and developing ways to increase the 'voice' of these communities
- Creating ways for communities to increase relationships in the community and access the support of the wider community and other assets and resources that exist
- Better use of community buildings to provide the support services needed in the community
- Ensuring those closest to issues are involved in future changes and decision making and can be part of the solution not just recipients of top down support
- Building trust and increasing the transfer of control and decision making
- Break down stigmas, developing relationships between communities and public sectors and providing the right conditions to support raising residents' aspirations

Issues effecting resilience

There are broadly three levels that influence resilience within communities. The diagram below illustrates the key factors that lead to strong resilience.

Structural conditions	• Buoyant local economy and income • Spatial and built environment • Feeling safe and low crime • Effective public services
Social networks and capital	• Regular interaction and social contact • Ability to engage and access emotional and practical support or help
Self	• Ability to manage and regulate own help • Ability to access and attain a good education • Individual disposition

How do you achieve resilience?

Structural conditions	• A positive flow of money and resources, with long-term investment into the local area and public and private sector spending retained locally. • Network of diverse, responsible businesses and enterprises, committed to place, growing the local economy and providing good quality employment opportunities. • Good access to high quality physical environments, such as accessible public spaces that encourage community-led involvement, activity and development opportunities in the local area • Crime levels are low, individuals are less likely to become vulnerable to the impacts of crime • Spatial segregation is overcome, ensuring that communities are not physically disconnected to other places
Social networks and capital	• Strong and positive social networks • Reduced loneliness and isolation • Sense of community and positive relationships, people helping each other within communities and sharing resources • Individual and collective efforts to improve the environments in which they live
Self	• Maintaining good health and being able to manage health conditions, and to sustain employment, relationships and support networks through ill health • Able to access appropriate and adequate education, and be supported when in education • Awareness of public services, how to access and navigate and influence their own outcomes • Ability to afford and use developing technology to increase connectivity and knowledge • Ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from significant life changes and emotional trauma and deal with emergencies. • The confidence and ability to engage in reciprocity and gain purpose and value from the experience

Principles

Evidence based – at all stages of our work we will ensure priorities and focus areas are defined and tailored utilising evidence. This will consider the views, opinions and data we can obtain from those impacted by or closest to the issue, national, local and reginal data and the evidence that can be gained from other relevant inter-related aspects.

Codesigned / Coproduced - we will commit to viewing codesign and coproduction as mainstream approaches and not a bolt on activity that supports only the delivery element of a project, service or activity or when we feel we need additional resource. We no-longer need to take the lead but will adopt to allow other to do so with our support. We will take longer to conduct a review, redesign or introduce a new service so that we can allow coproduction to take place and we will recognise that our processes, perceptions and opinions will need to change to fully benefit from it.

Asset based – we will change our processes and approaches so that we take an asset-based view in all the work we do. We will start with what is good when we are working with individuals, situations and crises so that we can extrapolate very early the positive elements, assets, interests and skills that may be able to influence a quicker and more positive route for engagement and providing support. When looking to fill a gap in services or respond to a situation we will assess thoroughly what already exists both formally and informally and we will help communities to assess and become more aware of the skills and assets that are around them and how to use them to meet needs or improve situations.

Personalised and Holistic View – we will take a person-centred view which places greater consideration and makes better use of what matters to individuals. We will use this to help support, develop or improve a situation to achieve a more effective outcome. We will consider what the individual values the most before our personal or professional opinion of what we would value the most and we will use this better understanding of the person to also support more asset-based conversations. We will take a holistic consideration of the individual and the many aspects that may have influenced their situation and hold greater respect for the challenges and situations they have been in over a focus on their behaviours.

Partnership based – we will not work in isolation. We will work across all public services, including voluntary and community groups and private sector. We will encourage communities to see the potential and capabilities to build their own voluntary support network and become confident in accessing and partnering with others

Access to space, resource and support - Many communities in the past have benefited from access to support, resources and infrastructure – spaces to meet, community development and other support workers, and funds. We will continue to invest in this support, building on the experience of the past, will allow people to make the most of the assets, energy and ideas that they have.

Continual evaluation - we will periodically assess and review the areas that have been identified to ensure this focus remains valid. Our model will always ensure that we can extend targeted work to smaller geographical areas where there are 'pockets' of high need. Likewise, we will assess and review the themes and areas that we focus on to ensure that these continue to be relevant for Chorley in reducing impacts on local public services and increasing resilience and health outcomes where they are low.

Our approach to supporting communities

We will implement a plan for each community identified as requiring increased support to develop resilience and will use the methodology set out below. These methods can be used and adapted by any other service internally or externally to align our approach both internally and external with key partners and stakeholders.
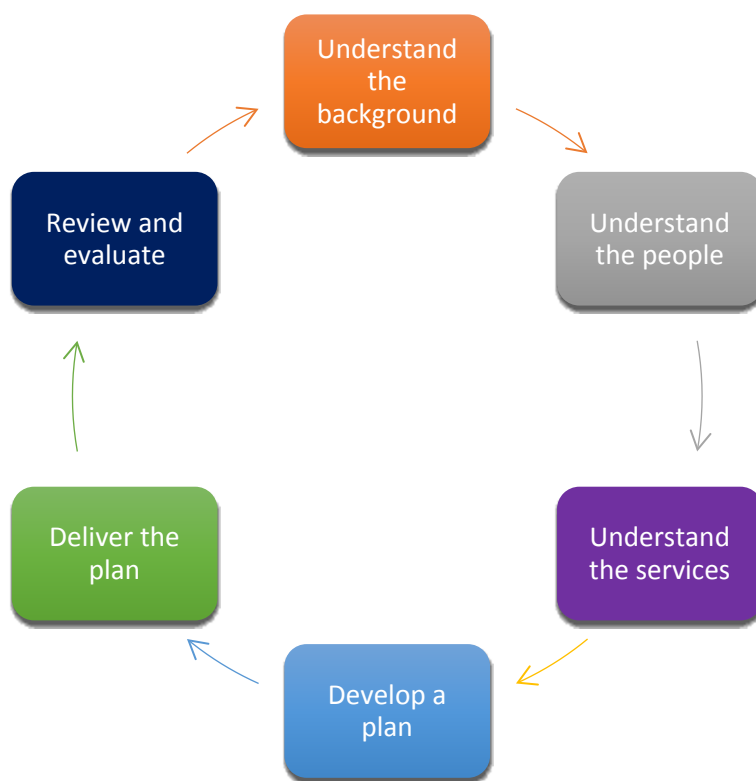
Our approach to engagement
When considering or carrying out exploratory stages of any community engagement activity we will:

- take a participatory approach, be open-minded and use local perspectives to co-design supportive, positive engagement and we won't assume we know what is needed or wanted
- be ethical, inclusive and avoid bias, aim to engage with a representative cross section including minorities and those with accessibility needs
- be transparent and accountable, manage information appropriately, monitoring, evaluating and sharing information about activities and outcomes
- work through existing channels, groups and networks with aligned active agencies to gain traction and avoid the risk of duplication
- acknowledge that different groups will need different levels of support and work in a way that assess and acknowledges this (informing, engaging, empowering)

The steps we will take

When working with a community for the first time, we will aim to understand them in the following ways. This will support the development of clear and coproduced plans to build resilience.

Understand the background: we will understand the background and history of the identified cohort or section of a community including factors such as the physical environment, levels of industry, access to leisure and social activities, open spaces and recent structural, environmental and other factors that have positively or negatively affected the culture or cohesiveness that impacts on resilience levels.

Understand the people: how they function, their values and priorities, current skills and capabilities, profile of the community, housing mix, employment levels, levels and types of complex lives, deep rooted historical issues.

Understand services: what services are accessed and how, how do these services work, what is not working in these services and what solutions do the community have for how they can contribute to new ways to achieve better outcomes.

Develop the plan: a plan developed based upon the understanding gained. Developed with the communities affected and with clear actions linked to identified objectives.

Deliver the plan: the plans developed will be delivered, working with the communities they are about. Public services will seek to take the lead only where necessary, and to encourage individuals and communities to lead action.

Review and evaluate: we will evaluate work undertaken to assess its impact and to inform future work.

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We will do this through:

- **On the ground conversations and interviews** using creative and exploratory questioning techniques to capture honest and reflective picture of life for the residents who make up the community we are working in or with.
- **Actively seeking out the views from those who are traditionally un-heard or under-represented** and ensuring these people are encourages and supported to be part of future work.
- Using approaches such as Action Research which involves professionals working alongside communities to test out different ways of working, starting with assets and building capacity and resilience through the research process.
- **Have a broader view of those who need to be consulted as a stakeholder** (everyone who is affected directly and indirectly) so that the potential to bring about a more effective change is much greater
- Development of t**rusted relationships in communities to bring forward cohorts of people** who can broadly represent the community and informally as well as formally communicate, gather knowledge and opinion representative of the community.
- **Seek out root causes and underlying needs** so that we can support systematic change and find ways to develop responses that can be activated at a very local level yet bring about positive long-term change.
- **Identify how short term and long-term changes** can both be used to achieve meaningful change that is designed in a way that builds in sustainability
- **Consider the impact of considering other public services' influence and work** with communities and residents and to align where possible
- **Capture data, findings and anecdotal evidence and record this** so that this can be used to inform the work to be done and evaluate in the future
- **Compare findings with national and local data** and research so that this can be considered alongside the views of those with lived experience
- **Challenge existing processes outside of our direct control** and find ways to work with other parties to demonstrate the impact of both simple and radical changes

Monitoring and evaluation of resilience

We will focus on two aspects of monitoring and evaluation:

1) Monitoring and evaluating projects designed to increase resilience

We will monitor the key milestones that we define through our resilience plans. This will cover off the process of delivering projects and expected actions such as:
- Establishing the current state in the locality and desired outcomes
- Identify assets and vulnerabilities
- Benchmarking and gathering anecdotal evidence
- Prioritise possibilities, agree actions and build / link in to other processes or work where relevant or beneficial
- Consider sustainability of changes
- Review, understanding impacts of early changes, results of prototyping and amend actions accordingly

2) Monitoring and evaluating our asset-based approaches

Asset-based evaluation will always be more qualitative than quantitative, using words and stories (anecdotal evidence) to appreciate impacts and provide evidence and it is used either independently or alongside quantitative data.

The framework for our asset-based evaluation will consider:

1) Who is involved in the evaluation:
   - The person – how has this helped me, my family, my friends
   - The community – how are things different around here as a place to live and work
   - Professionals – how has my involvement in this work had a positive outcome
   - Programme leads – what are we learning and how do we best use that learning
   - Funders – how can the impacts better inform funding decisions
   - Policy makers – how can a better understanding of communities lead to more effective policy making

2) The tools we will use, including the **Logic model** which is a simplistic plan that details the situation and the key actions to be taken with high level outcomes broken down over short, medium and long term.

3) Including individuals in the evaluation as well as the asset-based work itself using tools available such as a **Spectrum of Involvement** and **Purpose of Involvement**.

4) Gathering evidence where people are - making use of where people are naturally gathering to allow for unobtrusive and meaningful conversations.

5) Working to broad outcomes – asset-based work should allow outcomes to emerge rather than be prescribed. It will defeat the objective if outcomes are over-prescribed from the beginning.

6) It will sometime be unknown as to what data to collect therefore we will record what changes we can see or hear from conversations and behaviour changes. There is a need for greater analysis that data collection.

7) Testing what we hear – making sure we hear from the less obvious members of a community and obtaining multiple opinion and embracing contradictions.

8) Asset based approaches do not mean we cannot state or refer to deficits or issues of what is not right 'on the ground'. A community needs to be able to state what it wants to see change otherwise it won't be possible to gauge if anything has changed.

Evidence gained from our asset-based approaches to monitoring and evaluation will also support the review and development of this framework. Through this work, we aim to make long-term improvements to overall wellbeing and reduce demand on public services. We know that this will take time to change and will be difficult to monitor – but we will work to develop an approach to evaluate change.

Skills and training

To develop this approach set out in this framework we will need to consider if there are new skills and training requirements across public services in the borough. Training and development will help to support changes to approaches and processes and to embed the principles of the community resilience framework in all that we do.

For the council, the training will be focussed through the organisational development strategy. The public service reform partnership will look to develop an approach across public services.

Asset based approaches	to enable public services to be able to use this approach training will be required to show examples of how this style can provide better, earlier and more sustainable outcomes. An asset-based approach looks not just at what is wrong, what is lacking and how it can be solved by a third party but considers, what is working, what are the positives in the negative situation and how can these be used to create solutions.
Monitoring and evaluating	of asset-based approaches and developing the knowledge and skills of services and communities to be able to measure these types of outcomes.
Person centred approach	taking an individualised view of each scenario, recognising that what matters to individuals will dictate how they respond. Appreciating that those with challenges has assets and interests that can be more effective in helping to build resilience than external intervention and formalised support.
Listening skills	to be able to understand and appreciate the impact of information we are receiving and to enable an asset-based approach we need to ensure we train staff in techniques that will enable
Engagement skills	developing skills to support individuals and communities to recognise their own assets and to gather a better understanding of those communities.
Knowledge sharing	to be able to give the best advice at the best time how we gather, and share knowledge is important. This applies to both internal and external sharing whether through better inter-departmental relationship building and partnership working or signposting and advice and how we gather, coordinate and share this knowledge externally.

Identifying communities for focus

Public services need to target resources where it is most needed. Therefore, while the principles set out above will apply to all the work the council undertakes, this section sets out how work to build community resilience will be focused.

The council has used existing data and evidence to identify communities that need more support to build their resilience. It starts from the basis of identifying communities that have a higher concentration of people with lower resilience.

Signs of low resilience in individuals include:
- Inability to cope with even a low level of increased of stress
- Inability to react effectively to a challenge or negative change
- Irrational or irresponsible decision making and lifestyle choices
- Increased risk-taking behavior
- Higher likelihood for unemployment
- Increased risk of developing and increasing health conditions
- Loneliness and disconnection from positive social networks

Impact on communities when there are higher levels of individuals experiencing multiple factors associated with low resilience include:
- Lower levels of community collaboration
- Lower levels of civic pride and engagement in organized activities
- Higher levels of crime and anti-social behavior
- Lower attainment levels in education
- Lower income
- Increased health conditions and long-term impacts on health
- Under representation of views and ability to influence

We know there are individuals who have lower levels of personal resilience living in communities where there are signs of relatively good or high community level resilience, as well as the other way around.

Often, approaches used to improve community resilience will automatically support an increase in an individual's resilience and vice-versa, the more resilient an individual is feeling the more likely they will feel they are able to contribute and become involved in their local community.

There are multiple indices and other types of evidence and data that help us to decide where we may need to concentrate any efforts to do concentrated geographically across the borough.

Our first plans to build community resilience

Based on the principles and methodology set out earlier in this framework, the council has identified a series of communities that require greater support in the borough. These communities have been identified based upon the data and intelligence available on the indicators identified above.

Chorley (Inner) East
Clayton Brook
Chorley South West

We also know there are other geographical areas experiencing the same impacts but where the volume of people affected is lower.

Coppull
Adlington
Astley

Thematic indicators
From further research we know that there are some specific themes that also have significant impact on an individual's level of resilience, such as:

- Starting Well; a good start in life as a child
- Ageing Well; planning and awareness of remaining well through ageing
- Managing key life changes; bereavement, separation
- Onset of challenging health conditions; deterioration of health, onset of long-term conditions

These themes sit alongside our focus on employability and further developing a new pathway to employment and a cross organisational approach to developing more social inclusion opportunities and increasing voluntary capacity and opportunities.

The council's community engagement team will lead work to develop action plans for each of the communities and thematic indicators identified. These plans will be produced based on the principles and methodology and will be available and monitored through the council's Project Management system.

Opportunities to use this approach across other Council service areas:

Whilst this framework supports the overall approach to community development as a response to increasing resilience, it will not be effective if the principles are carried out in isolation.

There are opportunities to use these principles across other service areas, particularly around the element of community involvement and codesigned services, such as:

Team	Potential areas
Finance	Participatory budgeting: engaging with communities to provide opinions on budget options
Planning	Allowing greater collaboration, where statutory policy allows, for communities to influence planning decisions and changes to local policies
Development of systems and IT	Redesigning with individuals and communities at the start of the process rather than only testing or consulting at the end of a design, for example in the redesign of the Council's website.
Development projects	Allowing for greater input from communities, particularly those with additional needs on changes to the environment, town center, infrastructure development and other development projects
Health and Wellbeing	• inform redesign and delivery of pathways and support to increase employability prospects • work broadly across the borough to develop Neighbourhood working • review how we deliver services and adaptation through the Home Improvement Agency • improve the way that we use and develop community centres, leisure centres and other Council community assets.

The benefits:
- Communities can bring a different view and perspective that would not have been considered otherwise
- Communities see the same problem in a different way adding a different dimension to be considered
- Community involvement helps to deliver programmes which more accurately target local needs.
- Projects are more acceptable to more of the local community.
- Programme outputs which have been designed with input from residents are likely to last longer because communities feel ownership of them.
- The constructive involvement of communities helps to build local skills and supports increased resilience.

Opportunities to use this approach across other partners and public services:

To provide even greater impact this approach can be used by others such as agencies, partners and other public services to gain better insight to the impacts their services have and the opportunities to improve them with those who use them

Examples of services who could use these approaches could include;

- Police and emergency response services
- Health service providers and bodies
- Social care service providers
- Schools and Children and Families Services
- Housing Associations