

Proposal for a Resilience Commission for the Lancaster District

The Institute for Sustainable Communities defines resilience as being “ better able to prepare, adapt and get stronger in response to internal and external pressures and stresses, in ways that not only allow people, businesses, neighbourhoods, and the whole community to maintain essential functions and bounce back relatively quickly, but also to bounce forward toward an improved environment, social and economic health and wellbeing.”

The recent flooding and loss of power for fairly prolonged periods highlighted a whole range of vulnerabilities within our infrastructure and systems but also showed a good level of community involvement and potential strength in the face of those vulnerabilities.

This is currently under review by the Emergency Response Team - a Resilience Commission would follow on the work and recommendations of the ERT.

It would bring together community leaders at all levels and across a full range of interests including both the voluntary and commercial sector as well as fully involving district and county council, emergency services and infrastructure providers as necessary.

The aim of the Resilience Commission led by Lancaster City Council would be to facilitate and enable the district to build the resources that could save money, loss and hardship by mobilising the social capital of our communities.

Remit to include:

- presenting the ERT recommendations to community members to allow comment and consultation
- providing feedback on the consultation to establish a baseline for communities
- enabling individual interest groups eg shop owners to devise their own resilience plans which integrate with wider needs and resources and enabling neighbourhoods to create neighbourhood specific plans integrated as above
- create or co-create short/longer term action plans for city and county council where their powers and provisions would enable neighbourhoods to provide for vulnerable people independently in emergency conditions
- determine how the district could educate and motivate itself to follow up the recommendations of the commission and begin that process
- in pursuit of long term resilience in the district, highlight the need for changes to policy or practice in wider areas such as education, highways and travel planning, food supply, land use and river use, energy provision
- review its own work and make recommendations to a wider audience of local authorities and interested parties

Who does this and how?

Not sure -- it needs discussion

Funding – clearly the less dependant on outside funding, the more resilient the whole process becomes, however funding for officer and admin support, for running consultation days and enabling small groups to meet, for publishing/sharing findings and for educational/informational work at the end. I suggest we look for govt money from the flood funding as a replicable model for other districts/areas.