

## NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**SAFER, STRONGER COMMUNITIES – RURAL AND  
SAFER, STRONGER COMMUNITIES –  
ASHBY, BOTTESFORD & SCUNTHORPE CABINET MEMBERS**

### FINAL REPORT ON THE SHIELDING OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE DURING COVID-19

#### 1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 A final report on the shielding of vulnerable people in North Lincolnshire during Covid-19 is presented for consideration.
- 1.2 The recommendation is to approve the report.

#### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In the latter part of March 2020, approximately one and a half million people nationally were identified as extremely vulnerable to Covid-19 as a consequence of specific underlying health conditions. Locally, almost 7,000 residents were identified within this NHS Shield cohort. Additionally, people were identified within the wider population as vulnerable due to personal circumstance.
- 2.2 The North Lincolnshire approach to shielding centred on ensuring that vulnerable people stay **safe, well** and **connected** throughout their time in isolation. The strategy was organised in three parts:
  1. Championing a community-led approach to meeting people's needs through neighbourliness and acts of kindness, including the 'do one thing' campaign
  2. Mobilising a coordinated, place-based approach across public and voluntary community organisations for identifying and meeting the needs of vulnerable people
  3. Specifically, ensuring people within the Shield cohort with unmet needs are reassured, have access to food, medicine and social contact

2.3 The purposes of this report are to:

- summarise the enabling approach to Shielding in North Lincolnshire
- present some of the richness in the local solutions to this national challenge
- set out the learning and next steps that have arisen from our shared experiences

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 To approve the final report on the shielding of vulnerable people in North Lincolnshire during Covid-19.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 As the national Shielding programme comes to an end, approving the report provides the Council an opportunity to recognise the combined achievement of residents, volunteers, community groups and public bodies in enabling vulnerable people to stay safe, well and connected.

4.2 Approving the report endorses the next steps for embedding the legacy of the local approach to shielding in the Council's plans for working with communities and for organisational development.

### **5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 The report is in electronic format and requires no additional resources.

### **6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 Not applicable.

### **7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 An integrated impact assessment is not applicable in this case – the North Lincolnshire Community Shield Final Report is not an action planning document.

### **8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 Not applicable in this case as no consultation was required.

8.2 No conflicts of interest have been identified.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The recommendation is approve the final report on the shielding of vulnerable people in North Lincolnshire during Covid-19.

DIRECTOR: LEARNING, SKILLS AND CULTURE

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Date: 6 July 2020

### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

North Lincolnshire Community Shield Final Report

# Community Shield

North Lincolnshire's Shielding Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic

July 2020



North Lincolnshire  
Clinical Commissioning Group



Voluntary Action  
North Lincolnshire

North  
Lincolnshire  
Council

[www.northlincs.gov.uk](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk)

## Foreword

The global pandemic of Covid-19 has affected every resident of North Lincolnshire and yet, in this time of adversity, we have witnessed the very best from the culture of neighbourliness and care that is clearly present throughout our communities. Residents, community groups and public bodies have come together in new and imaginative ways to protect and enable people who have been made vulnerable during this time, with elected members galvanising action within their wards. Volunteers have stepped forward in unprecedented numbers. Council colleagues have responded with agility and purpose to the challenge, embracing new roles and ways of working with enthusiasm and dedication. This sense of shared endeavour has been both inspiring and humbling; moreover, it is a reminder of the incredible strength and resilience of our communities and of what we can achieve working together.

The purposes of this report are to:

- **summarise the enabling approach to Shielding in North Lincolnshire**
- **present some of the richness in the local solutions to this national challenge**
- **set out the learning and next steps that have arisen from our shared experiences**

There is a strong legacy to build on from the North Lincolnshire Shielding response for how the council, its partners and communities work together into the future to enable good outcomes for people.

Please accept my personal thanks and appreciation for everyone who has shown care and kindness to their friends and neighbours, who has added value in their community and who has worked in partnership to keep vulnerable people safe, well and connected during Covid-19.



Councillor Rob Waltham MBE  
Leader of North Lincolnshire Council



## National context

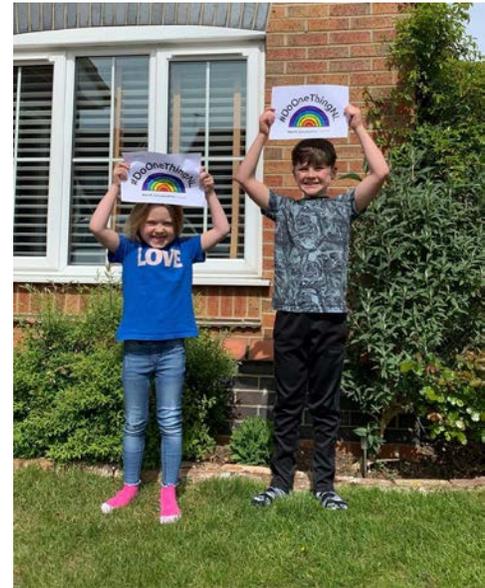
In response to the emerging Covid-19 outbreak in the latter part of March 2020, central government announced plans to shield approximately one and a half million people nationally who were identified as extremely vulnerable to Covid-19 as a consequence of specific underlying health conditions. The expectation on local authorities was to make arrangements for people made extremely vulnerable through social isolation – both within this ‘NHS Shield’ cohort while national arrangements were implemented, and also within the wider population.

## Local context

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen the council mobilise a round the clock response to support our residents and businesses. Locally, almost 7,000 residents were identified within the NHS Shield cohort. As it was made available, NHS data was cross-referenced to local data to understand those who may become extremely vulnerable.

The organisation of our shielding response was centred around ensuring that vulnerable people stay **safe, well** and **connected** throughout their time in isolation for the duration of the Covid-19 outbreak, with three aims:

1. **Champion a community-led approach to meeting people’s needs through neighbourliness and acts of kindness, including the ‘Do one thing’ campaign**
2. **Mobilise a coordinated, place-based approach across public and voluntary community organisations for identifying and meeting the needs of vulnerable people**
3. **Specifically, ensure people within the Shield cohort with unmet needs are reassured, have access to food, medicine and social contact**



## Championing a community-led approach to meeting people's needs through neighbourliness and acts of kindness

Many people who were in social isolation had support from family, friends and their wider community. The council championed these community-led approaches to meeting people's needs by togetherness, neighbourliness and acts of kindness through the **#DoOneThingNL** media campaign and creating opportunities for communities to be recognised for their efforts.

This successful community-led response enabled the council to focus on prioritising those in most need, who did not have support networks or where the community could not meet their needs.

North Lincolnshire residents and businesses have supported vulnerable residents across the area, ensuring they were kept safe, well and connected during the Covid-19 outbreak. There were numerous donations and offers of support to North Lincolnshire from different food sectors which were redistributed to over 500 vulnerable residents, whilst support and donations from other businesses across North Lincolnshire provided essential items for the local community.

"Thousands of good deeds are being done every day – people are making small acts of kindness such as picking up prescriptions, collecting fresh produce or sometimes just chatting on the phone."

- **Rob Waltham, leader, North Lincolnshire Council**

"I think the big thing is the people; the friends, the neighbours, the relatives of people have really stepped up in the community and they're helping people. The community response has been absolutely fantastic."

- **Cllr Jonathan Evison, Mayor of North Lincolnshire**



Local response

Council staff were repurposed and retrained to support the Covid Contact Line for residents and families during the pandemic. Within 72 hours we created an agile "from home" contact centre, transforming our way of working. We embraced new technology to help us create a connected team environment.

We took a 'community first' approach based upon local intelligence, regional and national data, putting the resident at the heart of everything we do. Staff provided information, advice and guidance, as well as signposting more vulnerable residents and families to direct support from the community, VCS or the North Lincolnshire Community Enablement team.



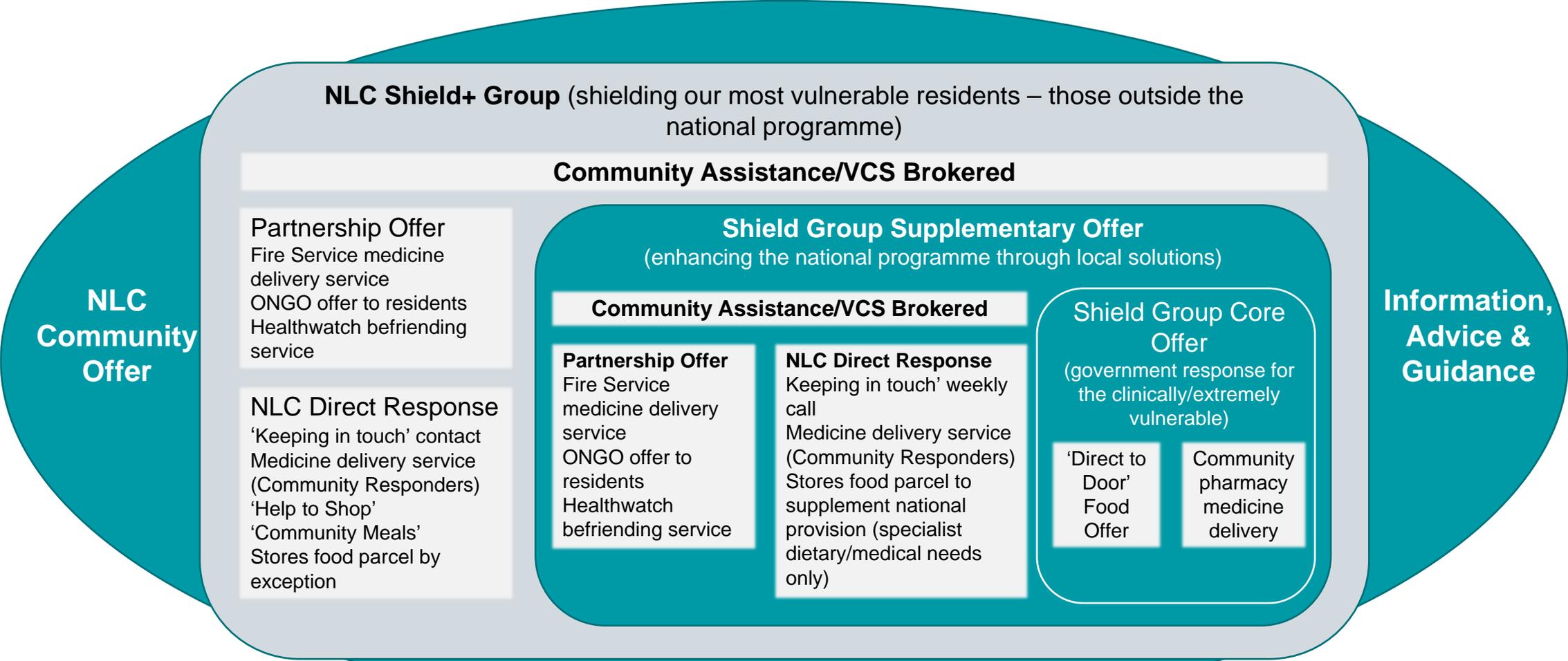
The council worked with the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), to develop a single point of contact for those who have been told by government that they have been identified as extremely vulnerable, and who have no support network and would otherwise be completely isolated. Links were formed with different community groups to broker support for different individuals who were shielding and in need of practical support such as collection of medication or food shopping.

Some of our amazing call centre staff - since the call centre started on 21st March 2020 there have been almost **3,500** inbound calls, and over **11,000** outbound calls.



We employed new communication techniques such as messaging around communities focusing on North Lincolnshire as a place where the council, partners and residents all had an equal voice. We quickly established multiple ways for residents to contact the council e.g. website contact form, contact centre, email.

The Community Enablement Offer



Just some examples of the amazing community response:

Scunthorpe’s **San Pietro Restaurant** launched San Pietro Angels, providing free meals to healthcare workers and those at risk.

Volunteers stepped forward in **Haxey**, where the parish council and **St Nicholas Church** offered support, and in **Garthorpe and Fockerby** a dedicated phone line and email address enabled the team there to respond whenever needed.

In Barton, staff at **The Ropewalk** made and delivered hundreds of hot meals with the help of **Barton Lions, Barton Rotary, Barton Town Council** and local businesses including **Tesco** and **Five Fathoms Gin**. The town also had a shopping service for anyone unable to leave their home, and had an army of volunteers checking that residents had all the help they needed.

Across **the Isle**, co-ordination between people in towns, villages as well as pharmacies, local supermarkets and independent providers: bakeries, butchers and greengrocers has enabled residents who were being shielded or in isolation to be provided for within the community. Local providers and businesses adapted to provide both a collection and delivery service.

The **Hope & Anchor** in South Ferriby and **Ferry House Inn** at Burton provided hot meals to vulnerable people and the **Shires** in Kirton-in-Lindsey used volunteer drivers to deliver 100 free Sunday lunches every week to people over 70 who live alone.

Facebook Group ‘**Provide Sunday Lunches to Local Residents**’ in Scunthorpe arranged the delivery of lunches to residents over the age of 70 and who live alone.

Jo and Steve at **The Old School Messingham** set up a fundraising page and appealed for volunteers so they could prepare and deliver meals once a week to over-70s.

Catering staff at **20-21 Visual Arts Centre** worked seven days a week making grab bags for homeless people.

Many Parish and Town Councils worked together with local people providing a helping hand picking up prescriptions, doing shopping or a friendly phone call.

**Westcliff Community Works** have been delivering food donated by **Aldi** to local families.

Parish councils set up a helpline for anyone in need of support across the **Kirmington, South Killingholme and New Holland** area.

The **Horn Inn** in Messingham delivered 200 Sunday lunches to the residents of North Lincolnshire, including the staff, nurses and doctors at Lindsey Lodge Hospice.

The **Epworth and Belton Good Neighbours** partnership was set up on the Isle of Axholme. 150 volunteers stepped forward willing to collect shopping or pick up prescriptions. Communities in **Crowle and Ealand** responded brilliantly by setting up their own food bank. They also printed 2,000 leaflets and had a bank of volunteers ready to help out anyone who needed assistance.



**Brigg** residents supported their local foodbank with new drop-off points set up in Brigg, Broughton and Wrawby.

Local charity **Bosom Family Support** teamed up with **Wortley House Hotel** to deliver meals to people receiving cancer treatment.

The **council catering team** worked hard to support children and their families to ensure they had access to food.

### Mobilising a coordinated, place-based approach across public and voluntary community organisations for identifying and meeting the needs of vulnerable people

To build local capacity, the council launched a volunteer portal, which attracted over 300 volunteers in the first three weeks. Some volunteers were connected to existing voluntary and community groups, with others being directly deployed to meet residents' needs – this approach was complementary to the national NHS volunteer scheme with local coordination mitigating the risk of duplication or omission of service.

Close working relationships with the North Lincolnshire Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Alliance has enabled the timely creation of a community volunteer hub to support volunteer recruitment, training and deployment and capacity building for voluntary organisations both new and established.



Ensuring people within the Shield cohort with unmet needs are reassured, have access to food, medicine and social contact

For people who are exceptionally vulnerable and for whom a community response would not have met their essential needs for food, medicine and social contact, the council made provision for individualised interventions. In the first three weeks of operating, the North Lincolnshire shielding service provided direct assistance to nearly 500 people by shopping for food, collection and delivery of medicine delivery and support with other essential items.

A 'help to shop' response has been particularly valued by extremely vulnerable residents unable to leave their homes to shop for themselves.



Since March, our Health & Wellbeing Activators have checked in with over 250 vulnerable residents. Up to 88 of those residents are now following a home exercise programme and the team are speaking to them regularly, giving them some much needed social interaction.

**8%** OF HOUSEHOLDS INCLUDE A SHIELDED PERSON

We have worked in partnership with Healthwatch North Lincolnshire to launch a Telephone Buddy Service to support residents during the coronavirus pandemic. Since March more than 260 calls have been made to 40 people.



The scheme is available to anyone living in North Lincolnshire, and to date, volunteers have had more than 80 hours of conversation, supporting a variety of people aged between 38 and 93.

Some examples of feedback received by the Contact Centre.....

"I just wanted to say how grateful I am to everyone involved with getting me a food delivery sorted so quickly. I am absolutely over the moon with the service I have received, and I have even shed a few tears."

"I would like to express my gratitude for the food parcel I have received this morning. It is beautiful, I am so grateful but do not feel I thanked the deliverymen enough, If they could be thanked again on my behalf I would be grateful. Thank you to everyone at North Lincolnshire Council, take care."

"I wish to thank all North Lincolnshire Council staff who are doing an amazing job...I am blown away by the team effort."

"Very impressed with the phone call to check on me, it's good to know that support is there and you don't feel alone with it all."

"Thank you so much to you and your colleagues for everything you are doing during this difficult time, what a fantastic service you are all doing and I am very grateful. Well done to you all."

"What an excellent service you are doing, checking people are ok and bless you all for your care and support."

**... and what do the Contact Centre staff say?**

- "We feel that we have really made a difference, helping people to find support and having conversations with residents to prevent social isolation"
- "We have formed a real team spirit within the contact centre despite not physically seeing one another for months and have kept each other's spirits up"
- "We are using knowledge from the calls taken to provide better information for residents on our website to enable faster access to support"
- "We have been called a lifesavers – I get to see first-hand the benefit to people's lives and I am now rethinking my career path"

### What was achieved for people in Shield and Shield Plus?

- A weekly friendly voice to talk to, relieving anxiety where required
- Meeting core needs of food, medicine and social contact
- Offering support and advice at each key point during the lockdown including advice as restrictions eased
- Wider conversations with landlords to support welfare needs
- Strengthening the reputation that the Council is a trusted source of information that can be relied upon.

A key part of the role has been offering reassurance. During this time many people became worried about the news. Phone calls to residents to pick up shopping lists or enquire about prescriptions also became a time to talk through their worries around the pandemic. This was especially key for those who were not digitally enabled.



Contact Centre staff have made **15,000+** interactions (so far.....)



**340** prescriptions have been dropped off

Face to face welfare checks became an important asset as lockdown continued. Working with Healthwatch, the Community Connectors and Responders visited residents homes when they repeatedly did not answer the phone. Whilst most residents were well and appreciated the face to face “check-in” a small minority were unwell and Council staff worked with paramedics on several occasions to support residents to receive medical attention.

## What did we learn?

The Covid-19 pandemic was an unprecedented event for which there was no possible preparation. Despite this, council employees were quick to adapt to new ways of working and were able to implement a workforce, systems and tools which would underpin and shape our response to the outbreak.

- New relationships were forged with the Voluntary Community Sector
- Our Communications Team was reshaped in order to be more responsive The 'Front Door' for the council was remodelled to enable further reach and a true one council approach.
- We found that employees could be dispersed and work effectively, as long as there were means of bringing people together.
- Bringing teams together from across the council to complete project work led to innovative solutions within tighter deadlines
- There is a better offer for residents when private business, voluntary/ community groups and statutory bodies all work together on a clear vision
- Greater real time intelligence and insight leads to better decision making and allocation of resources quickly and efficiently.

It is vital that we take forward the learning from our experiences and use this to better shape the council and our interactions with our communities.

"It's brilliant to see communities coming together and supporting each other. I've always known the community spirit in North Lincolnshire was one of our region's greatest strengths and this proves it."

- Cllr Rob Waltham, leader of North Lincolnshire Council



## Next steps – Shield Legacy

Our functional priorities in moving emphasis towards **recovery and renewal**, for enabling flourishing and resilient communities:

- **We will** build upon our relationships and work within our communities through the six community hubs at Ashby-Riddings, Barton, Brigg, Crowle, Epworth and Scunthorpe Central
- **We will** enable our communities to take control of functions that matter to them by introducing a Community Investment Framework
- **We will** ensure Covid-secure health and wellbeing facilities and activities, bringing the previously successful commercial offer within communities back on stream
- **We will** identify the capacity to step up a local shielding response, should it be required in the future
- **We will** build on a new blended learning prospectus for Adult Education and Community Learning (AECL) aligned to economic inclusion and enabling people to gain employment, in partnership with DWP and other stakeholders
- **We will** use the learning from the shielding approach to further enable resilient and flourishing communities, specifically:
  - enabling a culture of community collaboration, based on a shared understanding of *what is it like to live in our community?*
  - working with communities to support them in finding solutions to their needs and priorities
  - further integrating the leadership role of elected members in enabling community capacity
  - establishing a partnership infrastructure for communities
  - establishing a network of Team North Lincolnshire volunteers and mechanisms for volunteer brokerage
  - facilitating a Volunteer Managers Forum
  - creating a single place-based information, advice and guidance platform
  - utilising new integrated approaches to enable residents to stay safe and well
  - establishing a new approach to community contact
  - capitalising on data and intelligence to inform our response to residents and community needs

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