



Plymouth City Council Thriving Communities Delivery Framework 2026-2030

(Led by Community Empowerment, ODPH)



Background and Context

Thriving Communities is an updated delivery framework under the ODPH Community Empowerment Programme. Originally developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and approved by Cabinet in 2021, the programme aims to work collectively with communities to create conditions that realise the potential of everyone, improve wellbeing, and shape a thriving, inclusive city, drawing together resources from across the Council under a common framework.

Over the last four years, we have delivered some exemplar work together with residents, their communities and partner organisations. This includes resourcing a team of Community Builders who have engaged with 1000s of residents to take action in their local area to support community cohesion and tackle social isolation; promoting citywide volunteering opportunities and supporting over 700 people to volunteer with the Council; developing our Wellbeing Hub network from 5 to 12 locations across the city, reaching over 42,000 residents in the last 6 months alone; coordinating an outreach programme to address the cost of living and build financial resilience and access to affordable healthy food supporting over 1500 households facing economic hardship in 24/25; working with partners to deliver support and opportunities for the armed forces community through the Armed Forces Covenant.

This has been a cross departmental effort and a shared endeavour with diverse organisations from the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector (VCFSE) and local residents.

Whilst the original vision still stands, the new framework for 2026-2030 builds on strengths and reflects our learning. It also aims to address gaps and respond to changing national context, local need and new technology. Key updates include:

- Reframing the delivery plan under 'Thriving Communities', recognising it as a core part of the Thrive Plymouth citywide approach to tackling health inequalities
- A renewed emphasis on programmes that support prevention and build community and household resilience with responsibility for oversight of DWP's Crisis and Resilience Funda total of £12.5m over 3 years (2026-2029)
- Prioritising and resourcing high quality community engagement to support effective locally led decision making through Local Government Reorganisation and planned, large investment into the City's growth including Pride in Place
- Alignment with the NHS 10-year plan to co-design local health solutions with local communities, preventing and managing long term health conditions and tackling the wider determinants of health

This framework sets out 5 key delivery programmes and an action plan that will be renewed and reported on annually. The framework will be supported by an internal steering group and community of practice. The Cabinet member with responsibility will be the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Co-operative Development and Communities (or equivalent). Annual reports will be made to both the Cabinet and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Delivery Framework 2026-2030

VISION

Plymouth as a place where we work collectively with communities to create conditions that realise the potential of everyone, improve wellbeing, and shape a thriving, inclusive city.

PROGRAMMES AND OBJECTIVES

1. Community Engagement - Prioritise Community Voice and Influence

- An improved approach to community engagement and consultation for PCC set out in a Community Engagement Framework, building internal capacity through new tools and resources, training and networks and sharing of best practice
- Work cross-council to support regular community conversations and co-production of services with diverse voices to develop insight, sustain relationships and ensure local voices shape local decisions, policy making and delivery of the City's Growth including initiatives such as City Centre Living and Pride in Place

2. Community Building - Invest in Community Strengths to foster Cohesion

- Developing citywide capacity in Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approaches to identify and mobilize local assets (skills, spaces, networks), tackle discrimination and promote intergenerational and intercultural collaboration in line with our Equalities Framework and Armed Forces Covenant.
- Use Community Building to support grassroots initiatives and community-led activities, networks, asset transfer and enterprises in partnership with statutory, VCFSE and business sectors

3. Household Resilience - Prevent Problems Before They Escalate

- In line with PCC's City Help and Support programme, shift focus from crisis response to early intervention, bolstering the local-level support landscape, working cross-departmentally with Housing, Children's Services and Adult Social Care and in partnership with a range of stakeholders including Health and the VCFSE
- Build community resilience and individual health and wellbeing through promotion and delivery of programmes which evidence a reduction in isolation, improve sense of belonging, and support financial and food security.

4. Community Health and Wellbeing - Take a place-based approach

- Support collaborative and locally led health and wellbeing initiatives, with a 'no wrong door' approach, working closely with Wellbeing and Family Hubs, Libraries, Education and other community and natural infrastructure
- Support the health care system to develop a neighbourhood approach to preventing and managing long term health conditions, reducing inequalities and supporting healthier lives.

5. Volunteering for Change - Build a city of service

- Convene partnerships between public services, business and volunteers, collaborating to develop initiatives, share learning and measure social impact
- Facilitate networking, training and collaboration to ensure quality and breadth of volunteering opportunities for residents citywide, that build skills, networks and employability

Strategic Alignment

Corporate Priority	Thriving Communities Contribution
Local Government Reorganisation	High quality, Council wide community engagement through delivering training, resources and communities of practice; Supporting communities and VCFSE to engage in local decision making as LGR evolves
Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour	Community-led safety initiatives working with schools, young people and VCFSE; Supporting delivery of the Welcoming City
Cleaner, greener streets	Promoting stewardship, community events and activities in the public realm
Build more homes	Working in partnership with social housing providers; Supporting quality community engagement in city planning and Local Government Reorganisation
Green investment and skills	Contributing to inclusive growth; Digital inclusion; Good Food Local; National Marine Park, Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest and Green Communities
Better access to health and care	Supporting wider systems transformation, contributing to the development of a local eco-system of community-based support around multi-disciplinary Integrated Neighbourhood Teams
Keeping communities safe	Trauma-informed Wellbeing and Family hubs, safeguarding partnerships, community safety initiatives, vibrant community action in public realm that supports delivery of the EDI Plan
Prevention (City Help & Support; Building Bridges to Opportunity)	Delivering targeted resilience programmes that tackle the root causes of poverty, working in partnership with Housing, Children's Services, Adult Social Care and NHS

The Thriving Communities Programme directly supports delivery of the Healthy Communities petal of Thrive Plymouth, the Council's approach to tackling health inequalities. This is alongside supporting delivery of key policies from the Plymouth Plan:

- HEA 4 – Playing an active role in the community
- HEA 5 – Delivering strong and safe communities and healthy neighbourhoods
- INT 8 – Celebrating diverse communities

Principles for Delivery

Guiding Principles

- **Enabling:** Recognises the key role of PCC as a convenor, supporter, enabler, and systems steward.
- **Prevention First:** Focus on root causes and changing context, not treating symptoms.
- **Public Health Lens:** Address health inequalities and promote wellbeing.
- **ABCD Approach:** Start with what's strong, not what's wrong.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Providing appropriate measures to enable the inclusion of marginalized voices.
- **Human Learning Systems approach:** Acknowledge the complexity of health inequalities and the need for joined-up, adaptive solutions that value relationships and learning
- **Co-production:** Use of the principles to ensure design with, not for, communities.

Enablers of Success

- **Local Leadership Development:** Convening cross-departmental and system wide leadership in this space.
- **Data and Insight:** Use local intelligence to guide action and promoting reflection and iterative learning that values qualitative and quantitative evidence, indirect and direct outcomes
- **Partnerships:** Joining up with wider strategic plans and initiatives; Collaboration and relationship building with residents, community groups, associations, networks, collectives, sectors and services
- **Funding and Resources:** Use external funding to develop activity and support partner organisations to access grants and build capacity.
- **Effective communication:** Use clear and inclusive means of communication via a range of media including a new online PCC Community Engagement hub, ensuring transparency around decision making
- **Digital Inclusion:** Ensure all residents can engage online and provide alternatives where possible

Resourcing

There are no budget implications for the Council. A core team will be resourced from the Department for Health and Social Care's Public Health grant. Other activities will depend on external grants secured in line with the Framework themes, on an annual basis and allocated and reported on as agreed with the funders.

Funding Confirmed

Year	Total	Breakdown
2026/7	£5,172,186	£136,353 Public Health grant £800,000 Fairshares funding, NHS £35,833 Adult Social Care £4.2m DWP Crisis Resilience Fund
2027/8	£4,200,000	DWP Crisis Resilience Fund
2028/9	£4,100,000	DWP Crisis Resilience Fund

5 Programme Delivery Areas

1 - Community Engagement

2 - Household Resilience

3 - Community Building

4 - Community Health and Wellbeing

5 - Volunteering for Change

Programme 1

Community Engagement

To lead a process of culture change that supports effective and meaningful community engagement and co-production across the Council, to support more effective service delivery, in partnership with Statutory partners, Business and the VCFSE.

Delivery Mechanisms:

- **Community Engagement Framework:** Rollout and implementation of the new charter and framework to ensure accessible, culturally competent, and diverse engagement and consultation methods across the Council (digital and face-to-face), providing training and support in partnership with the VCFSE and an internal community of practice who champion the approach
- **Community Research and Decision making:** Regular engagement with local councillors, VCFSE, residents and identified diverse groups to gather insights to inform programmes, policies and strategies which feed into community decision making bodies in line with Local Government Reorganisation, Public Health priorities and strategic growth investment including Pride in Place and City Centre Living
- **Co-Production Initiatives:** Work in partnership with Commissioning, Economic Development, Health and VCFSE and local councillors to embed co-production principles, tools and practice where residents (including children and young people) service users, and professionals co-design local services and solutions.
- **Build partnerships and share learning:** Coordination of the VCFSE and Thrive Plymouth networks to promote collaboration and test-and-learn approaches to addressing health inequalities that are action-led, value reflection and shared learning and build long term relationships with Statutory and VCFSE partners, residents and communities – evidencing social value and continuous service improvement.

Highlights 24/25:

- Engaged with 489 residents face to face in the Big Community Conversation as part of Local Government Reorganisation proposal
- Developed a new Community Engagement and Consultation Guide for staff and set up an online information and training hub, committing to resourcing a new Consultation and Advisory role and training programme in 2026.
- Launched a co-production commissioning toolkit developed by Changing Futures
- Successful relaunch of the Thrive Plymouth network and coordination of a monthly online VCFSE network of over 120 members

Community Engagement Delivery Plan 26/27

Aims/Objectives	Key deliverables - Projects	Outcomes	Indicators of Change
<p>Ensuring a shared understanding and consistent high quality Council approach to engagement, consultation and co-production amongst employees, Members and stakeholders</p> <p>Encouraging customers, partners, staff and councillors to feel involved in how services are delivered</p> <p>Changing the relationship between the Council and residents</p> <p>Working with partners to help communities and councillors engage, find information and access the best resources to meet their needs</p> <p>Making PCC easier to navigate by the community by consistency in approach, removing duplication and barriers and identifying opportunities to join up</p> <p>Build a better understanding of the VCFSE amongst PCC staff and stakeholders</p>	<p>New online internal hub with up-to-date resources, best practice and lessons learned</p> <p>New online external hub with information and reports on consultation and engagement activity</p> <p>Programme of training and cultural change</p> <p>Active Community of Practice representing all departments to share knowledge, expertise and best practice with peer support</p> <p>Delivery of Big Community Conversations as part of LGR</p> <p>Coordinate a VCFSE network and link into the Thrive network to address health inequalities</p>	<p>Residents more engaged in decision making for key city issues</p> <p>Employees improve knowledge and skills in consultation/engagement</p> <p>Improved connections, relationships, collaboration between VCFSE, PCC and other Services</p> <p>Improved decision making as a result of community involvement</p> <p>Improved trust between residents and Council</p>	<p>Increase in number and diversity of residents engaging in consultation</p> <p>Increase in examples of co-production to inform service delivery</p> <p>Positive feedback from residents participating in consultation through evaluation of the process</p> <p>Number of employees active in PCC Community of Practice</p> <p>Number of employees and members participating in training</p> <p>Feedback from training participants on impact of training</p> <p>Number of users of the online hubs</p> <p>Active participation by VCFSE in the networks</p>

Programme 2

Community Building

To foster strong, resilient, and connected neighbourhoods where people feel a sense of belonging, mutual support, and shared responsibility, supported by a collaborative and networked VCFSE sector.

Delivery Mechanisms:

- **Community Builders Programme:** Practitioners embedded in specified deprived neighbourhoods and communities of identity to connect people; map assets; support local groups/networks; spark initiatives; build trust and belonging across diverse communities and with local services; support the delivery of community research around key city challenges
- **Asset Based Community Development:** Develop network of practitioners, training, tools, best practice, case studies and a culture of ABCD approaches across the city with partners, evidencing the impact on delivery
- **Community Networks/Associational Life:** Supporting resident networks and grassroots organisations that build community spirit, skills and capacity for hyperlocal initiatives and community led decision making in neighbourhoods including opportunities for micro-commissioning and small grants
- **Armed Forces Covenant:** Coordination and reporting progress of the Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan with key stakeholders, to deliver support and opportunities for the armed forces community within our locality, ensuring fair treatment and promoting integration into civic life.
- **VCSFE capacity building:** Advocacy and awareness raising of role of VCSE; supporting funding into the sector; supporting training, advice and guidance and impact reporting

Highlights 24/25:

- 952 residents were supported by a Community Builder to take local action
- Community Builders collected 300 stories from residents to bring lived experience insight in the Ageing Well Plan; Safer Communities; Sexual Health Prevention Framework
- Trained 90 professionals in ABCD practices, setting up a citywide peer-led network
- Supported 5 neighbourhood networks in Stoke, Efford, Devonport, Ernesettle and Barne Barton/St Budeaux and set up networks in Mutley/Greenbank and Plymstock distributing £20,000 worth of small grants across the networks on activities determined by members

Community Building Delivery Plan 26/27

Aims/Objectives	Key deliverables - Projects	Outcomes	Indicators of Change
<p>Build community led activities in local neighbourhoods</p> <p>Build trust and belonging in diverse communities and the armed forces community</p> <p>Improved understanding of the needs and experiences of local communities to support service design and to address key city challenges</p> <p>Build VCFSE capacity through facilitation of partnerships, networking and joint training/funding bids</p>	<p>Manage the strategic delivery of the Community Builders Programme</p> <p>Coordinate the development of Asset Based Community Development approaches</p> <p>Support the development of community networks</p> <p>Support delivery of the EDI plan</p> <p>Bringing together cross sector collaborations for social innovation</p> <p>Coordinate the Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan</p>	<p>Residents are more aware of community resources and how to access them</p> <p>Residents are more engaged and active in their local community</p> <p>Increase in active neighbourhood networks</p> <p>Increase in funding into the VCFSE sector</p>	<p>Increase in community led activities in identified communities</p> <p>Increase in active membership of ABCD network and case studies of the impact of the practice</p> <p>Increased participation in neighbourhood networks</p> <p>Case studies of hyperlocal activities led by residents/associations</p> <p>Case studies demonstrating how community research has informed policy and strategy development</p> <p>Increase in successful joint funding bids</p>

Programme 3

Household Resilience

To support residents to thrive by delivering crisis and resilience support that improves financial resilience, food security, and fuel poverty.

Delivery Mechanisms:

- **Crisis Resilience Fund (CRF) Programme:** Design, deliver and evaluate a programme of interventions resourced by DWP's CRF to both support households in crisis and build resilience through prevention work, in partnership with Housing, Children's Services, Revenues and Benefits and external partners.
- **Low Income Families Tracker Platform:** Maximise use of the LIFT platform and associated tools to design and track the impact of targeted campaigns/support and advice initiatives that support residents to access benefits, reduce debt, manage budgets, address housing issues and reduce fuel poverty at citywide outreach locations.
- **Food Security:** Collaboration with the VCFSE and Economic Development to ensure affordable local food access and education around cooking, growing and healthy choices - working towards Sustainable Food Places Gold Award.
- **Inclusive education, training, employment and skills:** Raising community awareness and participation in apprenticeships, internships and wider employment initiatives such as Connect to work, supporting young people, women furthest from the labour market and care leavers in particular and linking in with Wellbeing Hubs and Community Economic Development Trusts

Highlights 24/25:

- We supported over 1500 people in our outreach programme to access financial advice and support and food initiatives to address the cost of living.
- Trialled use of the LIFT platform in 2024/5, working with Citizens Advice Plymouth, Plymouth Energy Community and Plymouth Community Homes, to run a campaign to support low-income pension age households to access pension credit and other relevant benefits. Of 525 households targeted, 172 each gained an average annual income of £3420 of benefits that would have otherwise gone unclaimed.
- Set up 10 Food Coops and 2 Social Supermarkets to provide access to local, affordable healthy food

Household Resilience Delivery Plan 26/27

Aims/Objectives	Key deliverables - Projects	Outcomes	Indicators of Change
<p>Improving resilience in communities to address their priority needs e.g. financial wellbeing/food security/fuel poverty</p> <p>Facilitate collaboration with internal and external partners to support a 'no wrong door' approach</p> <p>Providing targeted support to communities that need it maximizing use of data and intelligence</p> <p>Providing timely support so that people can manage pressures, maintain control and avoid being pushed into crisis or prevent crises from escalating.</p> <p>Supporting ageing well, reducing social isolation and frailty for the over 65s</p>	<p>Project management of the DWP Crisis Resilience Fund with internal and external partners</p> <p>Coordinate an outreach programme making use of community assets to engage with residents</p> <p>Facilitate joined up working to ensure residents receive a holistic offer</p>	<p>Reduced experiences of material deprivation</p> <p>Reduced need for emergency food parcels and increased access to affordable food</p> <p>Increased access to appropriate and quality advice services</p> <p>Reduction in priority debt</p> <p>Increase savings</p> <p>Maximisation of individuals' incomes</p>	<p>No. people accessing financial, food and fuel support</p> <p>Increase in household income and reduction in debts</p> <p>Number of food access initiatives</p> <p>Number of food access initiatives</p> <p>Increase in numbers of Food Coops and engagement in Social Supermarkets</p> <p>Improved reported HWB</p> <p>Evidence of increased collaboration between services to support impact</p>

Programme 4

Community Health and Wellbeing

To embed health and wellbeing into the heart of every neighbourhood, creating an ecosystem of VCFSE, health and community initiatives that prioritise prevention and early intervention, support the health care system in preventing and managing long term health conditions, reducing inequalities and supporting healthier lives.

Delivery Mechanisms:

- **Neighbourhood Health Initiatives:** Support collaboration, capacity building and innovation with Public Health, NHS Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, Community Pharmacies, GPs, VCFSE, residents, and other statutory services to co-design local health solutions that reflect local need, building on learning from Changing Futures.
- **Wellbeing Hub Network Development:** Provide strategic coordination around the development of the network of Wellbeing Hubs as local venues for co-located services delivered by a range of partners in multi-disciplinary teams, working together with Family Hubs, Library Services and other community locations.
- **Community and Natural Assets:** Facilitate partnerships between Health, VCFSE, Culture, Youth, Environmental, Climate and Community Associations to bring in specialist advice, and advocate for community stewardship of local assets.

Highlights 24/25:

- Launched Wellbeing Services at 3 new locations at Foulston Park, YMCA Plymouth and Efford Library
- Initiated a neighbourhood health pilot with health and social care partners and VCFSE in PL5 with the Four Greens Wellbeing and Family Hub
- Developed the Wellbeing Hub Network data dashboard evidencing over 90,000 individuals accessing activities in the Hubs across 8 wards in the first 6 months
- Launched the Creative Health Network in partnership with Plymouth Culture
- Supported a Community Asset Transfer for the ELM Wellbeing Hub at Estover

Community Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plan 26/27

Aims/Objectives	Key deliverables - Projects	Outcomes	Indicators of Change
<p>Support delivery of neighbourhood health initiatives</p> <p>Provide strategic coordination for the development of Wellbeing Hub Network</p>	<p>Strategic Coordination of the Wellbeing Hub Network development and delivery</p> <p>Support the development of the NHS Integrated Neighbourhood teams</p> <p>More deprived neighbourhoods have access to a high quality HWB offer</p> <p>Co-production and design initiatives for delivery of HWB services in the community</p>	<p>Improved access to preventative health services</p> <p>People with long-term conditions feel supported to manage their condition (NHSOF)</p> <p>Reduced loneliness and isolation</p> <p>Reduced visits to the GP and Emergency Department</p> <p>Stronger community role in shaping local health priorities</p> <p>Stronger local ownership and sustainability of initiatives.</p>	<p>Number of effective multi-disciplinary teams embedded in Wellbeing Hubs</p> <p>Increase in number and diversity of community participation in prevention activities delivered by Wellbeing Hubs</p> <p>Increase in range of services and activities delivered by Wellbeing Hubs</p> <p>Cases studies evidencing impact on residents' wellbeing, social connection and reduction in isolation amongst vulnerable groups</p> <p>Increased use of other community assets in neighbourhoods (including Libraries, Family Hubs, community centres) to support health and wellbeing</p>

Programme 5

Volunteering for Change

To grow a vibrant, inclusive culture of volunteering that recognises the role of volunteering to help address the city's challenges and support community wellbeing, civic pride, and local resilience.

Delivery Mechanisms:

- **Building a City of Service:** Facilitate networking, training and collaboration to ensure quality and breadth of volunteering opportunities for residents citywide; Strengthen strategic links to the Civic Engagement Agreement with the local Anchor organisations and Team Plymouth
- **Skills for Service:** Training and recognition for the contribution of volunteers with specific links to employability and connections with Connect to Work; providing opportunities to come together and celebrate. Training and recognition for the contribution of volunteer co-ordinators/managers.
- **Convening for Strategic Impact:** Enabling partnerships between public services and volunteers and collaborating to develop initiatives, share learning and measure social impact.
- **Targeted Programmes:** Coordinate and develop volunteering opportunities within PCC (including Culture, Environment, Education, Libraries)

Highlights 24/25:

- Over 700 people volunteered with Plymouth City Council projects, including National Marine Park, The Box and at citywide events, convening at an annual celebration event.
- We created a digital badge accreditation for new volunteers and supported 5 placements for volunteers with experience of multiple disadvantage through Changing Futures.
- We supported 67 Volunteer Coordinators across the city in regular networking to sharing best practice and identify training needs.

Volunteering for Change

Delivery Plan 26/27

Aims/Objectives	Key deliverables - Projects	Outcomes	Indicators of Change
<p>Increasing the number of people who take action within communities of geography or interest to support a thriving community</p> <p>Develop and increase volunteering opportunities within PCC</p> <p>Support volunteering opportunities for staff to build understanding, relationships and support HWB</p>	<p>Develop and manage targeted volunteer programmes including Good Neighbours Scheme; Digital Inclusion; Age Positive; PCC volunteering</p> <p>Support collaboration, shared resources, training, recognition and impact measurement around volunteering with the VCFSE</p> <p>Understand the Local Authority's requirements for volunteers and support best practice</p> <p>Annual events and awards that support celebration and recognition of volunteering</p>	<p>Diverse opportunities for local people to be active citizens</p> <p>More residents engaged in high quality volunteering opportunities to address city challenges</p> <p>Increased awareness of the value of volunteering</p>	<p>Increase in numbers, diversity and quality of volunteering opportunities in targeted programmes</p> <p>Increase in number and diversity of residents volunteering with PCC</p> <p>Increase in number of staff using their annual volunteering day with evidence of impact</p> <p>Improved quality of volunteering coordination across the VCFSE</p> <p>Evidence of improved HWB from volunteers and participants</p>

Governance Structure

