

Forward Planning for Community Organisations

As we move from the immediate crisis response, and think about moving into the first stages of recovery/easing of lock down, there might be a set of questions which are relevant to think about or to offer a framework or checklist.

Community Need and Your Services / Activities

Has the need changed?

Who are you serving, how do you best meet their needs now (not how they were in February 2020)?

Who are your priority clients/communities?

How can you best meet their needs as restrictions are eased?

Are some clients/communities a higher priority than others for more contact?

How can you best deliver services?

Some aspects may remain as they have been during restrictions, others go back to how they were, others evolve.

Should remote delivery remain?

Does your volunteer offer need to change?

Have you got new volunteers going back to work?

Are previous volunteers who stopped because of COVID-19 (e.g. shielding) coming back in?

How can you manage and support them?

Organisation and Staffing

Which staff come back to the office and when?

Need to balance the personal (who is shielding?); with the organisational (who is a higher priority operationally?).

How do you rebuild a sense of identify and single organisation?

People will have had very different experiences while at home, how to reconcile that.

Operational considerations.

Maintaining social distance - work shifts, have people at home on different days.

How communications will work - it may feel more isolating at home if others are in your base.

Balancing the need to continue to use flexible and remote working alongside face to face.

Finances

What existing income have you lost or has been reduced?

Commercial income, contract etc. For how long/until when (might need different scenarios)?

What interim financial support have you got?

Furloughing, short term grants?

Consider your income streams.

What from your pre COVID-19 income streams remain relevant?

Does anything need adapting?

Is anything no longer relevant?

How do you adapt to these changes?

What other opportunities are there?

What assets and resources have you got? What are the needs of the community and can you meet them?

Collaboration and Challenge

How can you build on collaborations fostered during the COVID-19 crisis?

What new links have been made?

How do they support resilience and recovery?

How can you exert influence at different levels?

At street, neighbourhood, community, town wide and strategic levels.

As we build our new normal, can we be bolder in our challenge to inequalities?

What did you achieve during COVID-19?

It's really important to capture the impact of what you did, and tell the story.

Share your achievements – for communities to see what you did; for volunteers and staff to feel connected and part of something; and for funders to see the impact of what you did.

The 4 Rs

For each aspect of this it might be useful to think about the 4 Rs:

Rescue – what can you salvage from what you were doing before COVID-19 hit?

Reform/redesign – what needs to be fundamentally changed, but is still relevant?

Resilience – where is your resilience as an organisation, and how can you make the best use of it?

Ready – where are you ready to go; what changes did you bring in as a result of COVID-19 you'll continue to run with?