

Report to:

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Relevant Officer:

Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services

Date of Meeting:

8 December 2022

RESILIENCE REVOLUTION FINAL REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To present the evaluation of HeadStart Resilience Revolution programme 2016-2022.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

To review the report findings and recommendations.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To understand the impact and legacy of the Resilience Revolution.

3.2 Use and disseminate its findings to support the continuation of building resilience in Blackpool.

3.3 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.4 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 Priority Two - Communities: creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

6.0 Background information

The Resilience Revolution is an innovative whole town approach to building resilience, made possible by funding from The National Lottery Fund's HeadStart programme. Funding was available between 2016 and 2022, across 6 areas nationally in the UK with the purpose of testing and learning new ways to support young people's mental health (ages 10-16).

In Blackpool, the programme took the bold step of developing a vision for the whole town; giving everyone who lived, worked or volunteered in the town the opportunity to get involved. The Resilience Revolution embraced co-production as a way to design and test innovative projects. Co-production meant a range of people, with different expertise, working together, as equals towards shared goals including:

- Building lifelong trusted relationships between; young people, families, schools, workers and organisations.
- Working alongside schools to promote more inclusive learning environments.
- Working alongside young people and families on new ways to deliver support.
- Working alongside young people and families to make processes and policies that impact them, fairer.
- Raising awareness of what is unfair and how it needs to change through campaigns.

Over time, the Resilience Revolution worked to move systems more strongly towards the prevention of mental health problems. It helped people to "beat the odds", whilst also "changing the odds" (Hart et al., 2016); promoting well-being and created opportunities and new spaces for resilience to grow (RSA, 2018).

6.1 The Resilience Revolution supported

- 19184 young people in schools
- 2552 young people in target groups
- 841 parents and carers
- 152 volunteers
- 44 schools
- 3276 professionals
- 147 organisations

6.2 Impact Schools

With help from The Resilience Revolution, schools became fairer, safer and better places where the voices of pupils were listened to and acted upon.

Young people reduced their levels of negative thinking and saw statistically significant improvements in: feeling confident, feeling able to make changes in school, being hopeful about their futures, coping, problem-solving, understanding resilience and in being able to make friends.

Whole school approaches have played an important role in building a positive school climate that nourishes and supports pupils to maintain wellbeing and reach their developmental potential. Where schools had joined the anti-bullying Charter mark project, there was also improved wellbeing scores for the young people at those schools compared with school that had not joined the Blackpool Beating Bullying campaign.

School communities, including parents and carers, young people and staff, came together and customised the Academic Resilience Approach in regard to the strengths and needs of their schools.

Through staff training on resilience, Resilience Committees and innovation fund projects, transformations took place at both individual and system levels. For instance, at individual level, increased attendance, self-confidence, and pride in the school, as well as reduced behavioural episodes and exclusions were reported.

Parents

With strong relationship building through a blend of online and face to face opportunities for parents and carers in Blackpool, evidence of improved parent and carer self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy was observed. Groups of parents and carers took part in and led a range of training and learning events; and conducted interviews for social care workers and co-produced toolkits and guidance documents. The outcomes from this range of opportunities led to improved resilience and wellbeing, with particular focus on peer-support as a mechanism for improvement.

Our Children

The Resilience Revolution used brave innovative approaches that support 'Our Children' (Children Looked After) building longstanding and trusted relationships in school and in the community. Our Children reported improvements in their emotions, behaviours, aspirations, self-esteem, confidence, school attendance and civic engagement.

Our Children led projects such as training adult volunteers and picked a trusted and trained adult to be their Friend for Life. Over a 5-year period, Our Children, who were young friends in these projects, attended school approximately 2% more than Our Children without a Friend for Life. None of these young friends in the community projects have been permanently excluded from school.

Young people's Health

Through the Walk and Talk and Self harm support projects, young people took part in activities because they wanted targeted support with managing their emotions and behaviours. At the end of these projects young people had improvements in their life aspirations. Young people were more motivated and able to manage their emotions better. Some young people also improved relationships with peers. And specifically in self-harm project, 77% of young people did not go back to Accident and Emergency related to self-harm. The projects were very impactful for those who joined the activities with higher levels of negative emotions at the beginning.

Employment and Skills

Young people involved in co-production opportunities reported transformational impacts in confidence, sense of belonging and new life skills. A range of new employment roles specifically for parent, carers and young people with relevant lived experiences were created, this led to improved self-esteem, sense of belonging and leadership skills. Apprentices rated their experiences at 8.8 out of 10. Co-production groups also helped connect a range of local and national organisations, including Ofqual (Office for Qualifications, Examinations and Regulations) as well as ensuring recruitment processes became increasingly more accessible and relevant for the Blackpool community. Young people's involvement has indicated a long-term impact on aspirations and confidence about their future opportunities. Outcomes suggest a strong sense of empowerment and self-advocacy for young people

6.3 **Evaluation**

The strengths of the evaluation include the use of both quantitative and qualitative data mostly from multiple people which helped explore the impact on 10–16-year-olds not only from the young person’s perspective, but from multiple perspectives of people who work with, care for and see young people every day. This offers the evaluation a depth and breadth in its findings. Young people contributed to the design of the project and by incorporating their lived expertise and unique perspective to the design of research an additional layer of relevance is added. However, the results should be evaluated in the light of the strong and weak methodological features of the research and evaluation design. One limitation of the evaluation is the lack of control groups for comparison. This is the case across all the evaluation studies. Although this limitation affects every evaluation, the ethical consideration that the Resilience Revolution was not a clinical trial but a community-based resilience-building programme with the aim to offer support to as many young people as possible meant control groups were not feasible.

However, the absence of control groups prevented the researchers from eliminating alternative explanations of the findings. Therefore, normative trends in the literature for early and middle adolescence were used as a reference point to interpret the findings, where possible. Small sample sizes in some of the projects restricted the statistical power of research analysis. Therefore, even though positive trends were observed in the data, the statistical analysis either could not be computed or could not reach significance in these cases.

6.4 **Conclusion**

The report synthesises the overall impact of the Resilience Revolution programme and includes recommendations for policy makers. It also includes evaluation reports from each Resilience Revolution project. The final report (to be circulated separately) and executive summary (attached at Appendix 10(a)) can be disseminated independently to relevant stakeholders.

The Resilience Revolution implemented a town wide strategy that embedded ground-breaking, place-based, co-produced activity not previously tested on this scale. The programme was led by a Local Authority with statutory and complex democratic, organisational and administrative processes. However, the Resilience Revolution was committed to the ‘test and learn’ approach and developed/refined many elements of the programme based on learning over the course of the programme.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 **List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 10(a) – Resilience Revolution Executive Summary

8.0 **Financial considerations:**

8.1 None

9.0 **Legal considerations:**

9.1 None

10.0 **Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None

11.0 **Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None

12.0 **Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

13.0 **Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

14.0 **Background papers:**

14.1 None