

Lincolnshire Interim Operational Review

C19 National Foresight Group

Rowena Hill

Rich Pickford

Andy Towler

Andy Hopkinson

January 2021



**Nottingham Trent
University**



**HYDRA
FOUNDATION**

Supporting Experts - Managing Uncertainty



Not Protectively Marked

Author	C19 National Foresight Group (Dr Rowena Hill, Rich Pickford. Andy Towler and Andy Hopkinson)
Organisation	C19 National Foresight Group & Nottingham Trent University
Date Created	18/01/21—Version 5
Attachments @ para	N/A

This report and associated materials are Copyright © Nottingham Trent University and the report authors.

Dissemination, copying or further distribution of the report and materials must be requested by the authors in writing.

Corresponding author: Dr Rowena Hill - rowena.hill@ntu.ac.uk

Contents

Foreword	4
Executive Summary	7
Summary of Recommendations	8
Scope and Methods	11
Findings	14
Finding One: Developing for the Future	16
Recommendations for Developing for the Future	21
Finding Two: Impacts on People and Relationships	22
Recommendations for Impacts on People and Relationships	26
Finding Three: Leadership and Strategy	27
Recommendations for Leadership and Strategy	32
Finding Four: Impacts on LRF Partnerships	33
Recommendations for Impacts on LRF Partnerships	37
Finding Five: Resources	39
Recommendations for Resources	41
Summary of Main Findings and Conclusions	42
Technical Appendices	46

Foreword

I write this foreword at a very poignant time; whilst respecting a further national lockdown, Lincolnshire is proactively engaged in an ambitious deployment of vaccines, including the opening today of a large-scale vaccination hub at Boston's Princess Royal Sports Arena. The most enduring emergency response in modern times continues and every daily update on those taken from our communities by Covid-19 is as heart breaking as that previous and so the offer of a vaccine is very welcome news.

As the former Chairman of Lincolnshire Local Resilience Forum, I recognise the value learning can add to any emergency, especially to one with such a long tail. Typically, in the form of a debrief after response, learning is carried forward into the next emergency. The opportunity to reflect and afford learning during an emergency is rare. You should be applauded for taking this opportunity and approach of continuous improvement with a duty of candour. Moreover, I know sharing this review with the national network of Local Resilience Forums will be welcome as many of your experiences and learning may be mutually applicable.

I commissioned this interim operational review, with your kind sponsorship, across Lincolnshire at every level of response and recovery for that very reason, to save lives, relieve suffering and support communities during this crisis. With over 70 partners invited to participate, 49 participants have contributed to share compelling personal experiences, intended to shape and inform the ongoing response and beyond.

In the same vein as the UK-wide Interim Operational Reviews I commissioned for government, this review has been delivered by a collaboration between Professor Jonathan Crego M.B.E, Director of the Hydra Foundation, and Dr Rowena Hill and her dedicated team from Nottingham Trent University. As a previous participant of Hydra sessions with Jonathan and a Nottingham Trent University alumnus, I have confidence in this combination of resource and expertise, notwithstanding the scale, complexity and speed of the challenge. Supported by Andy Towler and Andrew Hopkinson, who kindly contributed practical expertise of civil contingencies, I am very grateful to this review team for their professionalism, dedication and uncompromising resolve.

It is striking, when completing this review, how locked in emergency planners and LRF partners have been in Lincolnshire with emergencies. Spanning two years, Lincolnshire LRF has sustained concurrent local, regional and national emergencies such as adverse weather, notably Wainfleet and surrounding villages, in addition to EU transition and now this pandemic. Nonetheless, Lincolnshire LRF continues to deliver and is one I hold in high regard. From its ground-breaking Community Risk Register, the SCG command training portfolio and now the innovative 'Tom, Dick and Harriet' campaign, Lincolnshire LRF is accomplished at emergencies and civil contingencies. That said, it is clear from this review that, despite some exemplar status, those engaged in delivery of such public service over such a prolonged period are not immune to fatigue and psychological impacts, like our communities.

As with any LRF, there is still margin to improve and this report presents analysis and details recommendations to do so; some which you may consider to be priority recommendations which may be enacted now to inform this ongoing response and beyond. Other recommendations are more long term in nature and, whilst they should be considered now, may be of such scale, complexity and depth that they may not be realised as quickly. Their value is significant and should not lack traction,

nor are they exclusive to management of a pandemic.

My personal commitment is to share this learning with you and I am assured that you have bespoke arrangements and governance in place to maximise the benefit and value shared by participants.

I commend this interim operational review to you and thank you for the opportunity and all that you do.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shaun West', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Shaun West, Chairperson, C19 National Foresight Group

Note from Professor Jonathan Crego

Traditionally 10,000 volts (10kV) debriefing requires the participants to be in a large room, seated at tables and have access to one iPad per participant. I have facilitated these events by standing at the front of this room, managing the flow and focus of the debrief. Some debriefs have been hugely emotional where participants cried when reliving their operational experiences. Others have taken place after a sophisticated operation, where brilliant creative decision making and experiences required capturing for operational learning. Over the last 25 years I have carried out over 400 operational debriefing and review 10kV events. The technologies, methodologies and report analysis approaches are validated by scientific methods and are continually evolving.

The outbreak of Covid-19 prevented me from running these events due to restrictions on co-location. I modified the 10kV software to operate on smartphones remotely and designed a new approach for facilitation, achieved through a live-streaming video enabling me to facilitate during the sessions. In response to Covid-19 the C19 National Foresight Group asked me to run national debriefing sessions with LRFs, SCGs and partner organisations across the UK. I have named the new approach '10kV-Cloud' and it has become a true legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Lincolnshire event was the 15th event we have run during the crisis.

This report has been analysed by a very dynamic and capable team led by Dr Rowena Hill at Nottingham Trent University. They have taken my methodologies and further developed them into outstanding tools. The report provides an unassailable record, evidenced by the lived experiences and operational realities that dedicated professionals in Lincolnshire have faced over this crisis. They poured out over 27,000 words during the session and I feel proud to have been asked to deliver the event.



Professor Jonathan Crego M.B.E BSc.(Hons) Ph. D.
Director, Hydra Foundation

The Academic Team from Nottingham Trent University

The NTU team acted as an intelligence cell during the 10kV session and analysed the data and co-authored the report.

Dr Rowena Hill*

Rich Pickford

Dr Lisa Sanderson

Dr Sally Andrews

Dr Duncan Guest (intelligence cell only)

Professor Thom Baguley (intelligence cell only)

The Subject Matter Experts

Andy Towler, Founder and Director, The Resilience Group

Andy Hopkinson, Associate, The Resilience Group

*Denotes corresponding lead author for all enquiries or questions

Executive Summary

This review took place on the 9th November 2020. England was in its second period of national lockdown measures (5th November to 2nd December), and would go in to at least one more period of national lockdown from Monday 4 January 2021. The data was collated in the period of time that the second national lockdown measures were introduced. The report was completed in the time period of the third national lockdown measures. This report is written cognisant of the changes that have happened during this time. At the time of data collection a second wave was being experienced within England. At the time of completing this report, Christmas Day bubbles had occurred, the more transmissible UK and South Africa variant of Covid-19 had been identified and the NHS was under a super surge in most of the South East, East and in London. The vaccine rollout plan had commenced with three vaccines being approved within the UK.

This report is written in the context of the pandemic, but where possible the learning taken from the experience of the pandemic is not limited to the management of Covid-19 or a health emergency. Instead this report aims to support Lincolnshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to apply that learning in a range of contexts.

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed gaps in Lincolnshire LRF's capabilities, and this review has captured the learning and provides 22 recommendations to implement this learning. The five main themes are;

1) Developing for the Future

- Developing the LRF
- Facilitating the LRF Partnership

2) Impacts on People and Relationships

- Impacts on People
- Impacts on Lincolnshire

3) Leadership and Strategy

- Government Support and Leadership
- Leadership within the local context
- Politics impacting on the local leadership context
- Strategy and leadership
- Mental health strategy and transparency of activities surrounding mental health

4) Impacts on LRF Partnerships

- Relationships within the LRF
- Partnership Relationships
- Partnerships with Health
- Relationships between the LRF Partnership

5) Resources

- Resilience Direct
- Resource Concerns
- Resource Considerations

Throughout these discussions within each of these themes transparency is touched on in one way or another. Transparency between cells, between partners, between the LRF and public, between members and the LRF. Continuing to increase both external and internal transparency seems to be a consistent thread throughout the discussions in different contexts and should be considered by the LRF partnership. A number of recommendations focus on actions that implement this increase in transparency.

Summary of Recommendations

Developing for the Future: Finding One

Recommendation 1.1: The LRF should ensure it has a mutually agreed competency and training framework which clearly articulates the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each LRF partner agency in supporting the multi-agency response to provide the capacity and capability to deal with the threats identified in its local risk register and National Security Risk Assessment.

Recommendation 1.2: The LRF should maintain a competency and CPD register for all staff expected to work in the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG)/Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) environment, with a particular focus on key roles such as SCG/TCG Chair, Command Support Manager or Multi-Agency Information Cell (MAIC) Chairperson.

Recommendation 1.3: The underpinning LRF Training and Exercise Programme should be informed by a Learning Needs Analysis. The Learning Needs Analysis should be informed by the National Security Risk Assessment and the new and emerging structures and ways of working developed during the pandemic, as well as being informed by the personal experiences of those involved in the multi-agency response.

Recommendation 1.4: The LRF Training and Exercise Programme should include a means of rapidly onboarding new staff before and during an emergency response.

Recommendation 1.5: To better understand what worked well and identify specific areas for development, the LRF should undertake a specific debrief of the efficacy of the both the warning/informing and wider communication functions of the multi-agency response during sustained emergencies. This should include consideration of the interactions between the local and national communication strategies and the role of the local media. The LRF Training and Exercise Programme should include a specific focus on this area to increase transparency of the LRF business and structures.

Recommendation 1.6: Undertake a technology audit to ensure partners can communicate and work together to deal with disaster.

Recommendation 1.7: Building upon the positive experience reported by delegates, the LRF should clarify with partners how it will further develop the capability and resilience of the MAIC in order to mainstream its effective deployment during all future emergencies. In doing so, it should consider the learning and recommendations from the national MAIC review and how the Lincolnshire MAIC engages horizontally with other MAICs operating in other LRF areas and vertically with any regional or national MAIC structures.

Recommendation 1.8: To improve the efficacy of the multi-agency response and promote shared situational awareness, the LRF should ensure it has arrangements to afford all responding agencies, regardless of location, ready access to key operating documents such as strategic objectives, situational reports and a visual representation of the command, control, and communication structures of the SCG, TCG and supporting cells, along with their specific terms of reference and who is represented on them. It should clarify who is responsible for establishing and maintain the currency of this vital information and that all partners are aware of how to access it.
N.B. This recommendation links to recommendation 3.4.

Impacts on People and Relationships: Finding Two

Recommendation 2.1: As the LRF has a primary responsibility for not just responding to an emergency but also co-ordinating the recovery from its impacts, the LRF should clarify who is co-ordinating both the assessment of the psychological impacts of an emergency on its communities and the multi-agency response to mitigate the impacts on the most at risk.

Recommendation 2.2: The LRF should work with government and other LRFs and LAs to identify leading/good practice and available tools to identify and map the impact of the pandemic on community cohesion, vulnerabilities and solidarity. This will inform the priorities of the immediate recovery work in this area.

Recommendation 2.3: The LRF should establish a multi-agency duty of care framework that goes beyond the current provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, so agencies work together and can provide mutual aid to support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all staff involved in the multi-agency response to emergencies. This should include engaging with appropriate mental health professionals to advise on the approach.

Recommendation 2.4: The LRF should consider ways in which they, and other partners, can publicly recognise the exceptional contributions of responders, key workers and their communities during any emergency.

Recommendation 2.5: Recognising the investment needed from partners to sustain the protracted response to the pandemic, the LRF must assure itself that its responsibilities for coordinating the Recovery phase are being effectively led and properly resourced. It must also ensure that stakeholders, including the public, fully understand what is being done, when and by whom to understand and mitigate the longer-term impacts of the pandemic on the communities within Lincolnshire. This includes the role of the mental health cell within the Response structures.

Leadership and Strategy: Finding Three

Recommendation 3.1: The LRF must draw on its experience of the ongoing national emergency to rethink its approach to responding to emergencies in the local context within a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous operating environment and be resilient in the absence of clear national support or guidance. Current and future threats may inhibit or disable the function of national government or at least see a deviation from currently agreed guidance and standard operating procedures. This necessitates a review of the LRFs operating framework, asset and resource capabilities and a willingness to develop agile responses to emerging threats in shorter timescales than any envisaged over the lifetime of its existence.

Recommendation 3.2: The pandemic and other similar emergencies challenge the accepted norms of working together in a single environment to tackle an emergency. To ensure the effectiveness of multi-agency participation, active engagement and participatory collective decision-making in both the SCG and TCG environments when using virtual meeting platforms, the LRF should consider what protocols, training and exercising is needed to maximise engagement and contributions from partners around the virtual table.

Recommendation 3.3: At a local level, the LRF must make friends before it needs them. The experience of Covid-19 has exposed weaknesses in the relationships the LRF has with its elected bodies and members. The LRF must develop a strategy that ensures the legislative role of the LRF is fully understood within the local political context. During an emergency there are clearly understood lines of communication that ensure cohesive political support to ensure democratic and community cohesion in a crisis.

Recommendation 3.4: The LRF must assure itself that the distinction between the roles and responsibilities of the SCG and TCG is clearly articulated and fully understood by all partners. This includes clarity around the triggers for standing up the different forums during the initial phases of an emergency and how the strategic objectives and activity of the multi-agency response are initially developed, and how they will be regularly reviewed and updated.

N.B. For recommendations focussing on mental health strategy and transparency of activities surrounding mental health, see the recommendations under the Impacts on People and Relationships.

Impacts on LRF Partnerships

Recommendation 4.1: The LRF should review the membership of the LRF and SCG forums to ensure it is satisfied partner agencies can field representatives with the appropriate decision-making authority to assure the efficacy and effectiveness of the SCG during the multi-agency response to a major emergency.

Recommendation 4.2: The LRF should develop effective strategies to engage with new and emerging response and recovery structures such as Local Outbreak Engagement Boards and proactively engage with them to secure mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each forum and how to work together and maintain shared situational awareness during an emergency.

Recommendation 4.3: The LRF and strategic health partners must engage with partners at the local and regional level to share the experiences reported by delegates, promote understanding of the LRF and health structures and identify how it can work more effectively with health partners to protect Lincolnshire from the impacts of local or national threats.

Resources: Finding Five

Recommendation 5.1: The LRF needs to consider how to overcome the limitations of Resilience Direct and ensure it is utilised as the sole secure platform for providing and maintaining shared situational awareness and decision logging or consider utilising an alternative platform such as Microsoft Teams, recognising the risks and drawbacks of deviating from the national platform.

Recommendation 5.2: The LRF must conduct a stocktake and review of its people and asset capabilities to deal with large scale multi-month emergencies such as a pandemic. In short, its resourcing capacity and capability have not been planned and trained to deliver against the reasonable worst cases for a range of national threats. The LRF must ensure it has a resilient physical, digital and human resource capability to match its core responsibilities.

Scope and Method

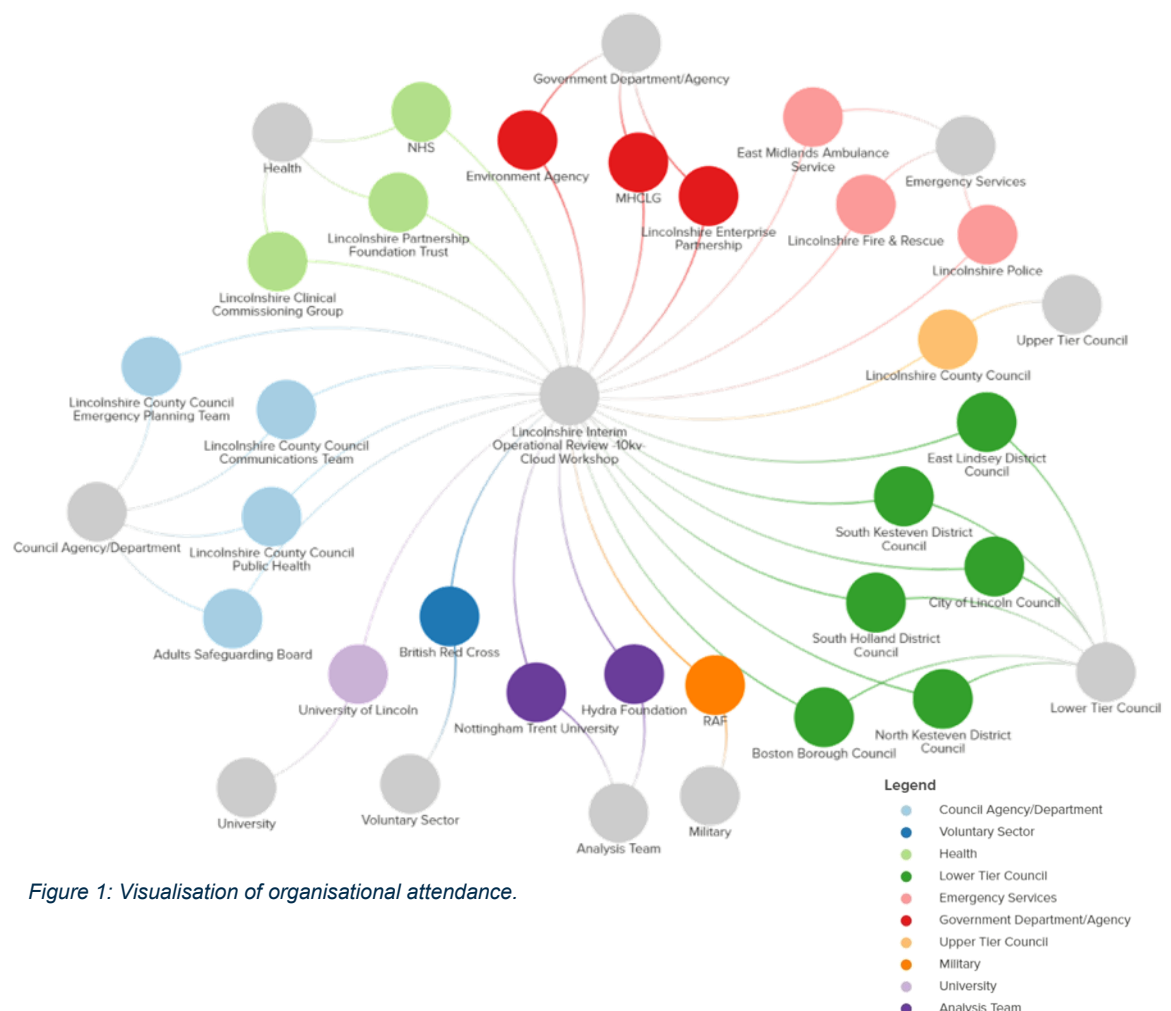
Scope

The Lincolnshire LRF partnership sponsored a mid-crisis review where approximately 70 delegates from across Lincolnshire were invited, during the ongoing Covid-19 national emergency, to offer their reflections and experiences of that ongoing emergency within Lincolnshire. They considered the capacity, capability and sustainability throughout an enduring ongoing emergency to inform the current and future management of Covid-19 and other emergencies.

This interim operational review was supported using an online model of the 10kV review called 10kV-Cloud. The Hydra Foundation has completed over 400 debrief and review sessions and whilst the original approach allowed participants to attend a single location, this new method enabled participants to engage without travelling and has been used several times in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The 10kV-Cloud operates on smartphones and tablets and uses a video stream as a format to instruct delegates on the nature and approach of the review and to provide facilitated direction during the session. The 10kV method creates space for participants to post anonymous comments on questions posed to them. It also encourages reflection and comment on peer thoughts during the review. The contents of the 10kV were analysed, themed and shared in this report.

Delegate Representation

49 individuals from 23 organisations, agencies and departments from Lincolnshire took part in the Lincolnshire Interim Operational Review.



Method

The review took place on Wednesday 9 November 2020 between 14:05 and 15.30. During the review over 49 delegates logged on via smartphones or laptops. Using the Hydra 10kV process, delegates responded (via written text) to the following questions (below). Delegates were anonymous and where this report uses data to illustrate and evidence the analysis, any identifying places, names or references have been removed to retain this anonymity. The questions were chosen to align with the three previous National Interim Operational Reviews as those questions led to significant valuable insight. The framing of the questions were nuanced to the local context.

Question	Subquestion
1) In the scope of the pandemic so far, in the context of your Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG)...	What is working?
	What isn't working?
	How well do you feel the SCG will aid the management of the remaining phases of the pandemic?
2) In the scope of the pandemic so far, in the context of your Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG)...	What is working?
	What isn't working?
	How well do you feel the TCG will aid the management of the remaining phases of the pandemic?
3) In the scope of the pandemic so far, in the context of your command support cell structure (MAIC; Warn & Inform; Vaccination; Engage, Enable & Comply; Communities & Volunteers; Finance; Mass Fatalities; System Coordination; Business & Economics, Mental Health; PPE; Health & Social Care)...	What is working?
	What isn't working?
	How well do you feel the command support cells will aid the management of the remaining phases of the pandemic?
4. Forward Look—Preparing for a challenging winter	In respect of managing a local outbreak, how robust do you feel your current local outbreak plans will be when faced with viral transmission and its mitigation?
	In your local context, how prepared is Lincolnshire LRF for lockdown 2 and exit from it?
	In the context of preparing for a challenging winter (combination of seasonal flu, EU transition, adverse weather or other concurrent emergency), describe how you feel your plans and resilience will cope with these cumulative demands.
5. Your legacy contribution to Covid-19	What support and interventions are your partnerships (in the widest sense) putting in place to identify and address psychological impacts in your community in relation to the pandemic
	What are the key steps Lincolnshire LRF should take to maximise its resilience to natural hazards and malicious threats? How can we build a whole of society approach to tackle these challenges?
6. Personal Reflections & Messages to inform Strategy	This open section provides a space for you to record your personal insights, thoughts etc., which may not have been covered by the questions above.

Table 1: Table of Questions

Analytic Approach

The thematic analysis took a phenomenological approach, using the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis was completed by three academics and this analysis was quality assured by a fourth academic. The steps briefly comprise of familiarisation with the dataset, initial coding of the data, theming those codes, clustering the themes to form a theme and subtheme structure. Subsequently the steps of clustering, nesting and theme mapping were undertaken to develop an overall theme and subtheme structure for the full dataset. These themes were named according to their cluster to provide better representation of the underlying subthemes and coding. This report focusses on the themes and subthemes and the analytical description of those structures.

To evidence the analysis and themes excerpts are taken directly from the data set. These remain unedited to safeguard the integrity of the delegates' original entries.

The team have worked on four other interim reviews and discussed potential bias in terms of letting the coding generated in that debrief influence the current process. This 'bracketing' out of positions, views and data is checked through the analytical checking that is done by others in the team and is a well-recognised technique to safeguard against bias whilst maintaining subjectivity of interpretation of the data.

Over 27,500 words were generated over the six question sets. The raw data was analysed by academics from Nottingham Trent University and the Hydra Foundation to create findings and recommendations contained within this report.

Report Structure

The report is broken down into a few key sections; the scope and method, the findings and the conclusions and recommendations. The five main themes derived from the analysis and their subthemes are described and evidenced with direct quotes from the data. The analysis mostly focusses on the consideration of resonance of the theme in the data. In other words, how important the theme or subtheme is to the participating delegates. Some themes might have a low number of codes but be more important to the delegates and their experience than a large number of codes on the same theme, but which consists of descriptive data. The analysis took account of these differences in the codes and themes.

Findings

This review generated five themes with their subthemes. The figure below is a graphic representation of these scaled to the proportion of codes which contribute to those themes and subthemes.

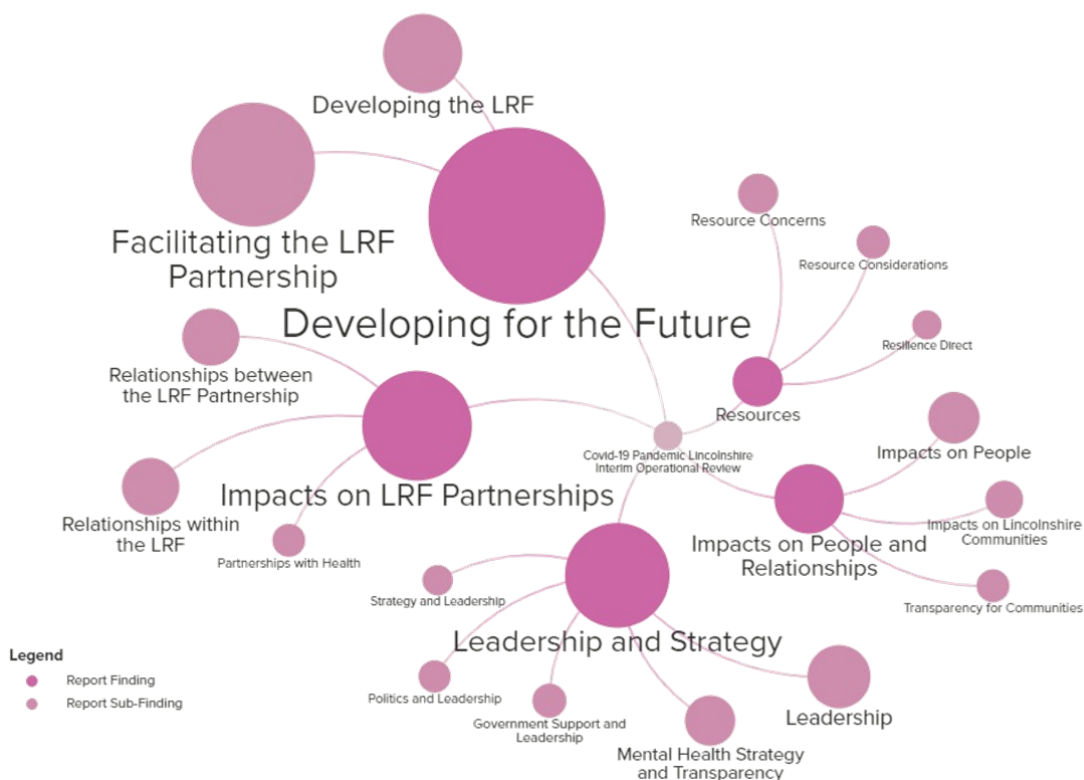


Figure 2: Visualisation of themes and subthemes scaled by code allocation.

The distribution of responses per question is shown below. As can be seen in the figure above, the largest number of codes was generated in response to the first question set, followed by question sets four, then two, then three, then six and the question set with the smallest number of codes was in question set five.

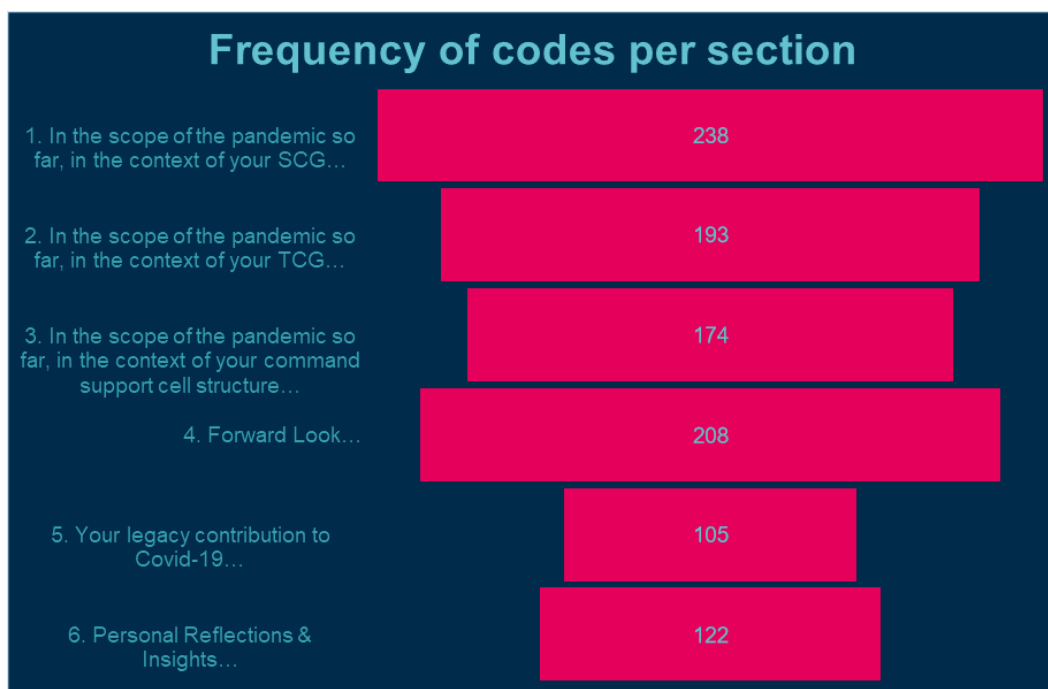


Figure 3: Frequency of codes per question

The distribution of responses per theme/finding is shown in Figure 4 below.

As can be seen from the figure above, the theme with the largest number of codes was the theme developing for the future. The second largest number of codes was the impacts on LRF partnerships, leadership and strategy was the theme with the third largest number of codes. Impacts on people and relationships was fourth and the theme with the lowest number of codes was resources.

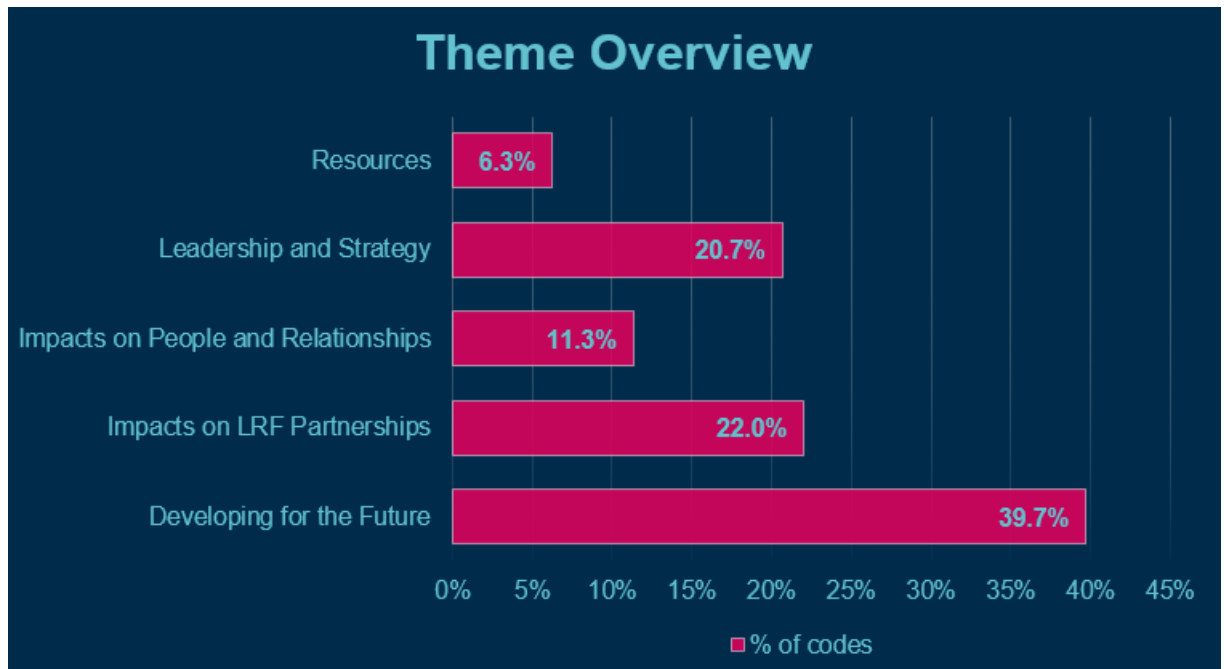


Figure 4: Theme breakdown by code allocation.

Developing for the Future: Finding One

Delegates discussed ways in which they saw the immediate, midterm and longer-term priorities of the LRF shaping. This theme has two subthemes, and the extent to which the issues pertaining to these subthemes were generated by delegates is shown below. The largest contributing factor was facilitating the LRF partnership, developing the LRF was the other contributing subtheme.

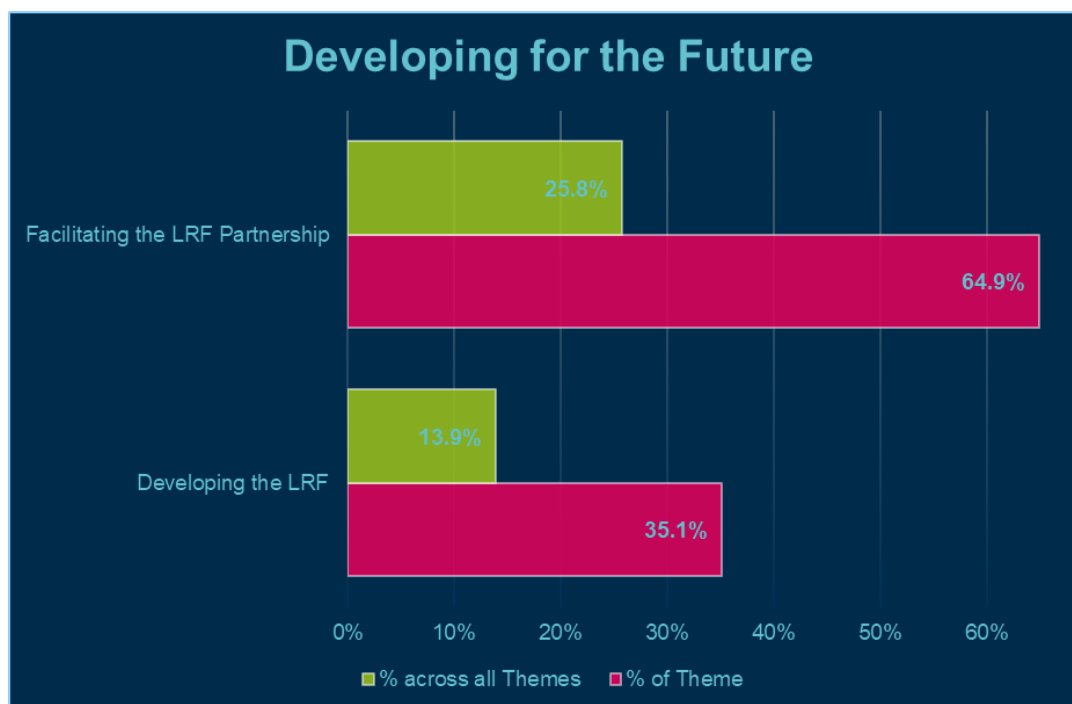


Figure 5: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes in the overall theme of Developing for the Future (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Developing the LRF

This subtheme focusses primarily on three areas. One is learning which delegates viewed as a priority going in to the immediate and longer-term future, the second is a review of the approach of training and the third is the priorities of communication flow within and outside of the LRF partnership.

Delegates were very clear throughout the review that learning is key to their development in the longer-term and their effectiveness in the immediate steps in the management of the pandemic. This is the learning from the pandemic so far, to take into the preparations of the next phases, and also the learning which should be captured to inform longer term developments of the LRF.

“As we are entering the response phase again we can learn from the lessons learned.”

“I think we are well prepared as we are currently in the second lockdown having learned a lot from the first lockdown when things happened very quickly.”

“This incident was very different to our previous incidents and have reflected this in our review of staff training. We are using case studies to highlight the differences between emergencies and how there can be different expectations placed on our staff and feel this will help prepare.”

“‘Certainly initially it was the 'usual suspects' on the SCGs TCGs and Cells leading to a great deal of pressure. Certainly that has gone better and there is more resilience but certainly in our organisation there is a very limited number of people trained and capable of delivering a SCG/TCG cell chair type role.”

“Hopefully the learning gained from this experience will be widely read by all SCG/TCG members and will shape the future response to the pandemic.”

This learning is supported by a review of training needs of those who have been through the pandemic; what do they see as priority training for the future; what do they feel has been a beneficial experience to include in future training; the need to offer training to those currently involved in the LRF to increase the understanding of what the LRF is and what it is responsible for; the training needs of senior leaders in preparation of the next major incident and the training needs of new structures such as the Multi-Agency Information Cell (MAIC), the Local Outbreak Engagement Boards and other new structures associated with the LRF. Delegates suggested that this training review should also ensure attendance at these future training events, as past training has been relatively low in attendance, including during the Covid-19 pandemic. Attendance at training was seen as potentially increasing partnership working, reducing misunderstandings and conflict and increasing individual confidence in their roles and crucially increasing the pool and resilience of trained staff.

“Organisations must commit their staff to the LRF delivered training for SCG and TCG staff - this great training will support a wider pool being involved. Can the LRF consider delivering some 'light touch' training to rapidly onboard more staff and increase resilience.”

Organisations must commit their staff to the LRF delivered training for SCG and TCG staff - this great training will support a wider pool being involved. Can the LRF consider delivering some 'light touch' training to rapidly onboard more staff and increase resilience.”

“Recognise with hindsight the lack of real awareness of the potential impact on SCG/ TCG command level structure which needs to be addressed through appropriate forward resource planning and training assessments. Didn't even know of MAGIC before the pandemic. Humbled by the sacrifices made by others.”

“Being placed into an environment with more experienced colleagues - with no induction and / or training - led to feelings of anxiety that were already heightened due to everything that was going on around me. Time must be taken to ensure that doesn't happen again.

We've taken this on board from some other cell debriefs and we're working on this already :)

Great to hear!

This type of issue could be easily avoided and I am sure that others would not volunteer through fear of having a similar experience. The availability of written guidance setting out what to expect, how things operate and the role would really help. Even a buddy system could be introduced simply.

Noted!

Felt the same, very much so.”

Communication was viewed as a challenging aspect of the LRF and throughout the emergency management of Covid-19. This included the challenge of aligning communication with the national communications, which was not seen as clear, focussed or specific enough to align local messages with. There was also lack of synergy with local media and press which was seen to have damaged existing relationships and presented a missed opportunity to align messaging. The internal communication between partners and between cells was also seen as challenging on occasion but this was mostly explained as an unintended consequence of remote working.

“Inter-organizational communications sometimes feels missing with a lack of synergy.”

Delegates commented that there had been some delay initially in getting some of the comms mechanisms in place. This was in part due to the fact that it was not clearly identified as to whether it was a health issue or a public health one. Lack of resources had meant that it had taken a long time before comms were effective from the LRF, not all partners were onboard around comms, whilst messages were often disjointed and not cascaded to all agencies/cells. This led to concerns that delays in information flow had led to follow up work or actions being delayed. It was also suggested that sometimes tactical partners did not feed through to strategic colleagues making it feel like there was a disconnect between tactical and strategic meetings. There was discussion of the lack of coordination of communication strategy with talking heads being off message and partnership organisations not being aligned with their strategies and content. This was perceived as being an issue for the cells and the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) to need to resolve as soon as possible. Some of the discussion focussed on the leadership of the warning and informing group. This seemed to have a split opinion between delegates as to whether this was effective in the initial stages of the pandemic in coalescing the partnership into one coherent strategy and providing the needed direction to align the messaging across LRF partners and structures.

“In the initial stages the warning and inform cell didn't work. Nobody would put up the resource and take responsibility for the cell meaning comms from the LRF was poor.”

“W and I are a key element of any emergency however throughout this pandemic it has been at odds with the LRF wanting to do its own thing. It needs strong leadership moving forward and understand the role it needs to support. It is there to support the communities of Lincolnshire not do its own thing, picking and choosing which meetings it does turn up to and which messages it feels like delivering.”

“Warning and Informing cell seems to work particularly well and I would suggest has saved a large amount of time and effort for all agencies and delivered consistent innovative messaging.”

“That's good as wasn't the case initially as no mechanisms in place. Partners doing own comms and not much join up.”

Facilitating the LRF Partnership

This subtheme explores the ways in which the LRF partnerships can flourish. This includes the development of structures and organisation of LRF activities

and the learning from successful processes for future events. One successful aspect is the flow of information and the Multi Agency Information Cell. Also included in these considerations to develop the LRF partnerships is how the structures and processes can facilitate good working practices. The information flow between organisations and across the partnerships was reported as being successful for a number of reasons. This includes the sharing of information into the partnership and also the coordination, synthesis and distribution of this back out across the partnership in the form of reports, foresight, updates and dashboards. Where some delegates said this could be improved was in the platform it was hosted on (dashboard or Resilience Direct (RD) access) or on the distribution of information across cells. The MAIC got a significant amount of praise for its usefulness and pitch of information. This MAIC, alongside Cumbria, was engaged in a national MHCLG MAIC sponsored pilot between July and September in 2020. The development points surrounding the MAIC was to suggest that it needs to be used in future incidents of all kinds and to suggest that it could have been supported better with skillsets being drawn across lots of organisations. This was following the observations that the multi-disciplinary skillsets recruited to the MAIC enhanced the effectiveness and this could have been developed further. However, this would have required further buy in from partner agencies. It would also have addressed some other areas for development such as the data being kept up to date and datasets being quality assured.

“MAIC cell has been excellent and sets benchmark for future emergencies.”

“MAIC this isn’t criticising the MAIC personnel but critical of how they have been resourced (or not), valued. There now seem to be personnel spread across a number of the cells and organisations that would probably sit much better in a single Information and Foresight cell. It is really important to know what has happened and what is likely to happen both locally and nationally.

I would agree, there are a lot more officers across other cells and in other areas (LRF partners) that have the knowledge and expertise to be used in the MAIC but have not been put forward or placed within the MAIC. Still causing lack of resources.”

“The MAIC is providing valuable insight and helps with understanding threat and risk.”

“Information flow in the form of the Foresight Report.

Power BI dashboard set up was good and was useful to create a common operating picture and kept the whole LRF informed of current situation.

Agree, this visual representation has been really effective access has not helped.

“MAIC cell has been excellent and sets benchmark for future emergencies.”

“It does need to be kept up to date. Some of the data is not very current and as different data streams have started to be used, some of the older data gets ignored. The use by different agencies of different dashboards and not global access has not helped.

MAIC really useful and sharing excellent information in a timely way.”

Overall, the LRF structures and their organisation were discussed by delegates as being facilitative of partnership working. This includes the pace, clarity,

purpose, Terms of Reference and operation of the structures such as the SCG, the Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) and other structures. Many comments referred to participants having confidence in their plans; that their plans were robust and had been externally scrutinised, that they had confidence in the plans, that they were well prepared for successive lockdowns, and that plans were working well. There was some sense that this confidence may be more hopeful than deserved, however, this was only a small subset of comments. However, there were concerns about resilience, that LRFs have limited control given that strategic decisions are made outside the LRF, and that the ability to cope will depend on expectations to maintain business as usual. The focus of development clusters around the capturing and sharing of cell structures as an induction process for members, the balance between organisational responsibilities and LRF partnership work, the lack of strategic objectives of the SCG in the initial stages (and the pace of review of these strategic objectives), the level of strategic focus of the SCG being too low and becoming more tactical and duplicating effort with the TCG, confusion caused by initial colocation by some and remote dial in by others. The positives include the support by the Emergency Planning team, the County Emergency Centre facility when it was opened and when its development is completed, the strong situational awareness, the responsive pace, the review of structures for alignment, the connectivity and framework of the cells. The processes within the structures ensures that partners know what to expect and can facilitate the process.

"The implementation of processes. Ensuring that there is greater understanding of what we are trying to achieve and how we plan to do it, this time round, has been one of the lessons we've identified. Utilising the JESIP meeting agenda consistently means partners on the teams calls know exactly what order issues will be discussed."

"There seems to be a proliferation of groups at tactical level and sometimes it is difficult to work out how groups relate to each other. The expectation of time commitment is significant, which is fine, but sometimes I felt that the meetings were a little repetitive and also that there was some "work generating" going on particularly when we moved into recovery following the first wave of COVID-19."

"The TCG appears to be working well and has a clear grasp of their responsibilities. The meetings are focused and allow for all partners to participate. It is easy to give situational updates and again these are acted upon. I do think that initially it was perhaps a little slow to get moving, however I think that the rapidly moving situation was in no small part responsible for that."

"Will be interesting to see how work across the cells is managed in a much more virtual environment. it was really helpful in the first wave to get to know the other cell chairs and address issues as they arose. perhaps need to ensure current structure including whos' who is circulated."

"Excellent updates to SCG once the rhythm was established, with good situational understanding of the issues."

The disruption Covid-19 caused regarding implementing a Covid-mitigated workspace meant that different working practices were implemented across the partnership. This was viewed as successful in the most part. The only challenge was when the technology did not stand up and became challenging. There was an unintended consequence of remote meetings, but these are discussed in the leadership theme further on in the report.

Recommendations for Developing for the Future

Recommendation 1.1: The LRF should ensure it has a mutually agreed competency and training framework which clearly articulates the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each LRF partner agency in supporting the multi-agency response to provide the capacity and capability to deal with the threats identified in its local risk register and National Security Risk Assessment.

Recommendation 1.2: The LRF should maintain a competency and CPD register for all staff expected to work in the SCG/TCG environment, with a particularly focus on key roles such as SCG/TCG Chair, Command Support Manager or MAIC Chairperson.

Recommendation 1.3: The underpinning LRF Training and Exercise Programme should be informed by a Learning Needs Analysis. The Learning Needs Analysis should be informed by the National Security Risk Assessment and the new and emerging structures and ways of working developed during the pandemic, as well as being informed by the personal experiences of those involved in the multi-agency response.

Recommendation 1.4: The LRF Training and Exercise Programme should include a means of rapidly onboarding new staff before and during an emergency response.

Recommendation 1.5: To better understand what worked well and identify specific areas for development, the LRF should undertake a specific debrief of the efficacy of the both the warning/informing and wider communication functions of the multi-agency response during sustained emergencies. This should include consideration of the interactions between the local and national communication strategies and the role of the local media. The LRF Training and Exercise Programme should include a specific focus on this area to increase transparency of the LRF business and structures.

Recommendation 1.6: Undertake a technology audit to ensure partners can communicate and work together to deal with disaster.

Recommendation 1.7: Building upon the positive experience reported by delegates, the LRF should clarify with partners how it will further develop the capability and resilience of the MAIC in order to mainstream its effective deployment during all future emergencies. In doing so, it should consider the learning and recommendations from the national MAIC review and how the Lincolnshire MAIC engages horizontally with other MAICs operating in other LRF areas and vertically with any regional or national MAIC structures.

Recommendation 1.8: To improve the efficacy of the multi-agency response and promote shared situational awareness, the LRF should ensure it has arrangements to afford all responding agencies, regardless of location, ready access to key operating documents such as strategic objectives, situational reports and a visual representation of the command, control, and communication structures of the SCG, TCG and supporting cells, along with their specific terms of reference and who is represented on them. It should clarify who is responsible for establishing and maintain the currency of this vital information and that all partners are aware of how to access it.

N.B. This recommendation links to recommendation 3.4.

Impacts on People and Relationships:

Finding Two

This theme focusses on the impacts that were discussed throughout the different questions by delegates. These were impacts on individual people and on the communities within Lincolnshire. This theme has three subthemes. The largest contributing subtheme was the impacts on people, the second largest contributors are impacts on Lincolnshire communities and then transparency for communities.

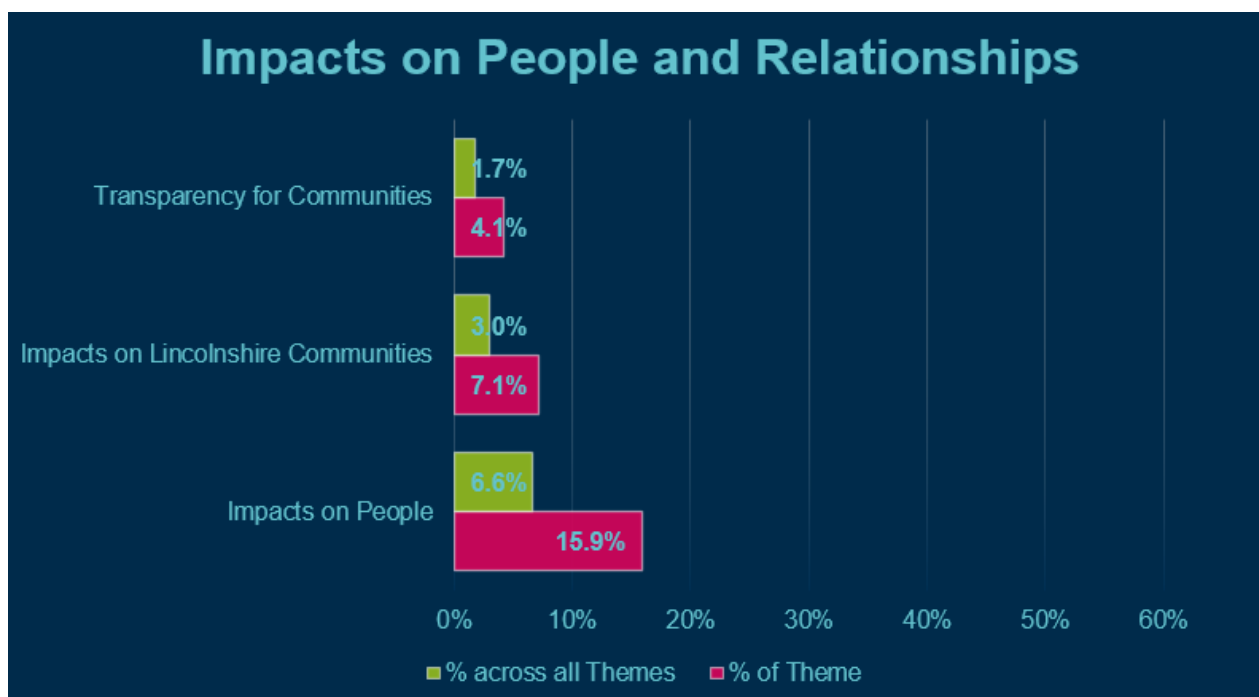


Figure 6: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes in the overall theme of Impacts on People and Relationships (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes

Impacts on People

This subtheme discusses the unknown likely psychological impacts on individuals within the community and also the staff within the responding organisations and partners. This was discussed throughout all the questions by delegates.

The unknown psychological impacts throughout the community was relevant for the delegates in two ways. Firstly, without knowing what those likely impacts are, the demand cannot be worked through, forecast and planned for. Secondly, without knowing what the likely impacts are there cannot be a common agreed coordination of resources to try and mitigate those risks and meet the needs. Both of these aspects need to be addressed in order to provide appropriate support to those individuals over the coming years, and to inform partnership working across relevant services and sectors, with strong leadership, to coordinate and deliver that support. This includes service design that is relevant to the communities in Lincolnshire and be cognisant of the specific context and demographics of place (e.g. age ranges, prominent occupational sectors, digital connectivity within the homes of the public).

“Don’t feel like there is a real handle on the psychological impact on our communities as no real leader or coordinator of this sector. Consideration of the wider resources available through private, charitable, voluntary and public sectors should have a sharing platform in such national emergencies.”

“We need a common view as to what the well-being impact has had on communities and a plan to deal with it.”

"We need to be clear on what the role of the LRF is in terms of this. We can see a significant challenge already around service provision capacity and increasing demand. Importantly we have engaged MH partners to help look at how we as the LRF can assist."

Agree re role of LRF but as collective partners we need a vehicle to raise these cross cutting concerns, a mechanism to feedback and a route to escalate."

"MH should not be outside LRF. Like other partners, MH provision should account for their plan. LPFT also I honestly do not think that there has been enough though placed on this. I also think that work needs to be done in relation to suicide rates and to understand the impact of COVID-19 on these. More also need to be done in relation to the digital revolution i.e. connectivity issues and access to IT equipment given the deprivation within parts of Lincolnshire."*

"No way near enough is being done about MH in our communities - we will be judged on this in later years."

**Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust*

The individual impacts mainly focusses on the impacts and experiences of staff responding to the Covid-19 response across Lincolnshire. Delegates discussed the personal cost which includes the ways in which it may have altered professional values, the way in which it has stretched or altered relationships with family, friends and work colleagues, how it may have altered or questioned professional confidence and competence, the ways in which it has tested team functioning with organisations and across partnerships. All this has a cost to the individuals who are working to manage Covid-19 in Lincolnshire. However, delegates also highlighted how the experience has also been a catalyst for change and also for personal development. This was particularly focussed on skill set development as a leader or adapting to a new role (specifically roles in LRF structures). This was seen as a positive aspect of the experience and one which has allowed many to stretch, develop and test new behavioural competencies and skills in a new environment.

"I felt for the first time in a long time that I had something really valid and necessary to add to my role in public sector."

"I am proud of the work I have done to support the collective response of the LRF. It has taught me a lot about myself and my colleagues and highlighted the huge value in working closely as LRF partners - we cannot underestimate how valuable it is to work together closely in peace time and build those relationships."

"I have grown so much as a leader and believe I am a much better person for the experience, if not a little greyer!"

"Definitely enjoyed playing my part and got a lot out of the experience."

"In the early days I felt overwhelmed, untrained and unqualified for the role I was undertaking. I believe that this was also the case for many others, and that added to the personal burden. This was made manageable by the fantastic knowledge and support of the EP team."

I'm with you!

Agreed - but also for those that join in later stages."

It is important to note that when delegates spoke about their experiences they

did not focus simply on either the negative, or positive impacts. Instead these aspects are experienced together in tandem rather than exclusively. This should be recognised in a number of processes. Firstly, any future training review (either within the LRF partner organisations or across the LRF) should be cognisant of the likely personal growth and development of individuals involved in the management of Covid-19 and should be designed to capture this growth. Secondly, the service provision put in place in the coming months and years across the partnership to support those involved in the management of Covid-19 should also take account of the positive and negative impacts reported by key workers.

“Personally, I have never been more proud of a team of people in my life. Sure there are things that we'd all do differently, but what a thing to be a part of.

I have not just made great professional connections and relationships as part of being involved in the response but also feel I have made some really good friends as well. Everyone dealing with the day to day response has been so supportive of each other. Yes, we have challenging conversations sometimes but we get the job done. I am so grateful for all of the knowledge and skills I have learnt from others. I have been, at times, frustrated, tired, angry, proud, happy, etc etc but members of the Cells I have engaged with have always been there for me to have a chat to, even when they are as massively under pressure as I have been.”

“Nothing could have ever prepared me for the past eight/nine months. As a senior clinician I have never experienced anything like this. When I reflect on this emergency, I feel a huge sense of pride. Not for my work and contribution, but for the contribution of the collective team that we have become. There have been some really difficult days, days where you were so tired and so exhausted - giving all, wanting to make a difference - not for the few but for the many. Feeling the weight of the responsibility and wanting to protect our population. This pandemic has taken from us personally and professionally. It has taken it from us physically, mentally and I dare say we will see it emerge and take from us emotionally. Would I do it again? ... in a heartbeat. We have achieved so much already and are committed to the cause.”

We also have some excellent political leadership that champion our residents - it would be brilliant if agencies contributions and expertise are recognised and engaged equally across all work streams.”

Associated with the delegates detailing the personal cost to them, there was also significant discussion focussing on the recognition needed to acknowledge the actions, sacrifices and successes of all those involved in the management of Covid-19 across Lincolnshire. This includes pride in what has been achieved, the recognition of sacrifices of individuals and teams and the support experienced across the partnership.

Impacts on Lincolnshire

Delegates discussed their concerns about the impacts on the communities across Lincolnshire. This includes the initial primary impacts of the virus and its management, such as economic and health impacts, and also the secondary impacts such as the relationship with the communities and their service provision. Concern for communities pertained predominantly to mental health and economic insecurity over the winter period and beyond. Delegates suggest

that, due to capacity limits, communities would not have as high level of support as they have previously, and expectations would need to be managed within the community that services would be compromised to some degree. This is due to the amount of resource, energy and people that are needed to work on the management of Covid-19. This is a reality that delegates felt communities should be aware of and they should work with communities to resolve. In order to mitigate community impacts, delegates were keen to support communities to increase their own resilience. There were comments suggesting that this could be achieved by working with the media, or otherwise communicating with communities to continue to build relationships.

"We may find that things the LRF could have ordinarily done in a 'typical' incident year may be far harder to achieve - we will have to work hard to explain this to communities.

Involving the media now may help with this - use them to support our messaging to communities about increasing their own resilience."

Previous theme discussions have already touched on the need for a longer-term view on the impacts of Covid-19 over the coming years. Delegates discussions suggested that this should already be being completed, with a longer term view included in the emergency management activities and agendas, for example in the work of the cells and in the work of the SCG. This is relatively unusual as this would typically be the remit of the recovery structures. But the timeframes (immediate, midterm and longer term impacts of Covid-19) and the battle rhythms (response, stabilisation, adaptation, recovery) were not typical or mutually exclusive from each other. Overlaying this with different paces of outbreak management and the education/training, economic and political pressures at local level, and the leadership challenges from central government, meant that delegates suggested structures which are typically response are now much more longer term and therefore should be addressing different timeframes such as impact planning for 2, 5, 10, 20 years from Covid-19 within Lincolnshire. This is in addition to individual organisation and sector planning within their own portfolios. Having a multi-agency, cross-sector and services view of the longer term was seen as being very beneficial to the communities of Lincolnshire.

"The SCG has not gripped the longer term impact and is still focused on responded to immediate threat. The longer term threat and risk needs to be worked into the battle rhythm."

Transparency for Communities

The discussion also focussed a lot on the connectivity with the public and an increase in transparency for the communities of Lincolnshire. This was primarily discussed as a way to increase the public relationship, but also increase the accountability to the public.

"More communication and engagement with the public. The public get very little involvement in how the LRF develops its plans so consulting with them should happen."

"It's a pity that the residents of Lincolnshire can't see how all partner organisations are working together to help protect them through this crisis. It's reassuring to see the commitment, expertise and professionalism at work."

Agreed - more comms and engagement to be sent to the public. Informing them of the partnership working and not just one organisation. Everything happens behind the scenes

I agree and feel to some extent this could be overcome with a dedicated website that doesn't sit under one organisation but is truly multi agency.

And is the place to go in an emergency for the latest information."

The aim of more transparency to the public of Lincolnshire was very clearly linked in delegates' discussions to an increase in accountability to the communities of Lincolnshire. This was seen as a clear priority moving forwards. Increasing the public's understanding of what the emergency management structures are, what they do, how they work and what they are responsible for was seen as a necessity for the LRF partnership. This was with the view that this understanding could then be used by the public to hold the LRF partnership to account for its responsibilities, actions and choices, or indeed its absence of action. In delegates' talk this was not linked to concepts such as efficiency and economic value, but clearly linked to a desire for a more collaborative, consultative relationship with the public. There was also a strong association in these discussions with recognition of the work that goes on, which is dealt with in the subtheme above.

Recommendations for Impacts on People and Relationships

Recommendation 2.1: As the LRF has a primary responsibility for not just responding to an emergency but also co-ordinating the recovery from its impacts, the LRF should clarify who is co-ordinating both the assessment of the psychological impacts of an emergency on its communities and the multi-agency response to mitigate the impacts on the most at risk.

Recommendation 2.2: The LRF should work with government and other LRFs and LAs to identify leading/good practice and available tools to identify and map the impact of the pandemic on community cohesion, vulnerabilities and solidarity. This will inform the priorities of the immediate recovery work in this area.

Recommendation 2.3: The LRF should establish a multi-agency duty of care framework that goes beyond the current provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, so agencies work together and can provide mutual aid to support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all staff involved in the multi-agency response to emergencies. This should include engaging with appropriate mental health professionals to advise on the approach.

Recommendation 2.4: The LRF should consider ways in which they, and other partners, can publicly recognise the exceptional contributions of responders, key workers and their communities during any emergency.

Recommendation 2.5: Recognising the investment needed from partners to sustain the protracted response to the pandemic, the LRF must assure itself that its responsibilities for coordinating the Recovery phase are being effectively led and properly resourced. It must also ensure that stakeholders, including the public, fully understand what is being done, when and by whom to understand and mitigate the longer-term impacts of the pandemic on the communities within Lincolnshire. This includes the role of the mental health cell within the Response structures.

Leadership and Strategy: Finding Three

This finding focused on the leadership at national and local levels and the ability to provide direction and strategy across these levels of operating. This has five subthemes. The largest contributing subtheme was leadership, the second contributing factor was mental health strategy and transparency, followed by government support and leadership, then politics and leadership and then strategy and leadership.

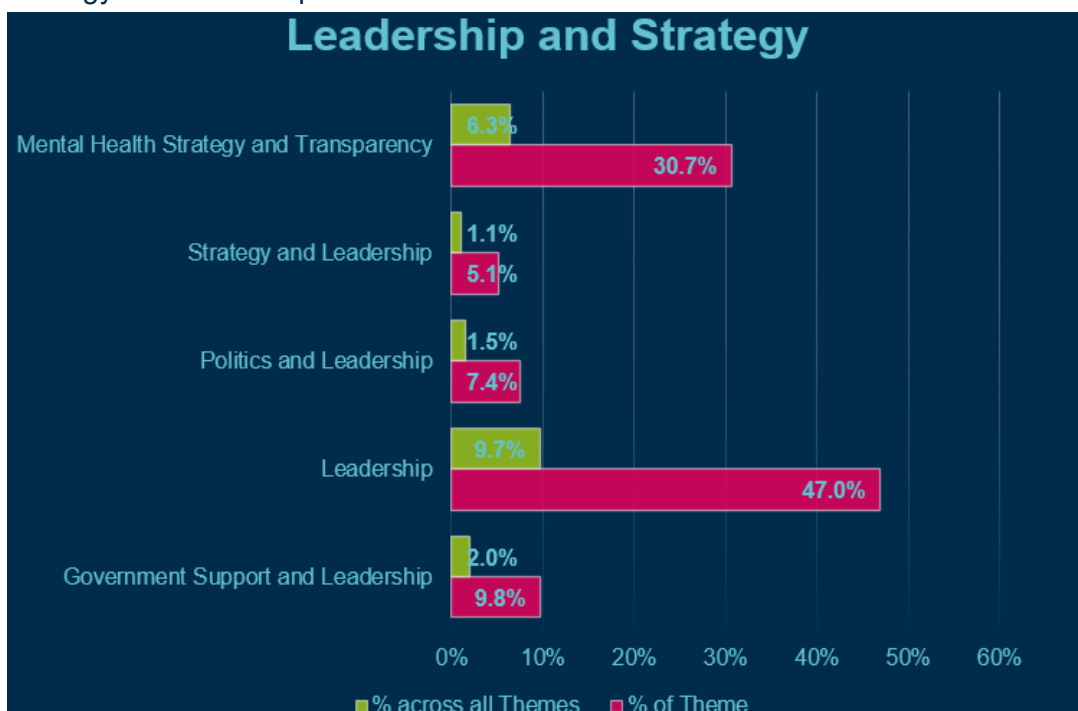


Figure 7: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes in the overall theme of Leadership and Strategy (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Government Support and Leadership

Delegates discussed the national context of the pandemic management and this discussion focussed on specific points to improve. This focussed on the lack of guidance, frequent updates without time for pre-briefing, leaving local teams to implement them with little direction. The announcement-led communication strategy to inform local teams of the guidance or policy was unhelpful. There was a lack of support and coordination from central government in key areas such as emergency aid. Regarding the government requests for information, they were duplicated causing additional burdens and initially the MHCLG representative was not a consistent individual or small group of individuals which also caused additional work to align and update the representative each time.

“Lack of support and guidance from central government has hindered response and recovery.”

“Would have been really useful to have had modelling provided and updated in a timely manner. Although there is now access to Sage reports it would be useful to have these distilled.”

“Sometimes government rep attending SCG was not familiar with the area or current issues in the initial stages, there was support offered from central government which did not materialise as expected, creating confusion and additional work to happen. At a time when organisation was key, there didn't seem to be much thought into the emergency aid offered and deliveries were inflexible. Information was requested by government which then had to be duplicated, more than likely because it wasn't being recorded accurately or passed to the relevant team/dept.”

“Conflicting information and unrealistic timescales for collation of information. Everything seems to go upwards but little trust and information coming downwards.”

These challenges are not specific to Lincolnshire and have been reported elsewhere in other sources of evidence, other sectors and across the national media. Therefore this is not a challenge that Lincolnshire LRF in isolation have sufficient resource or power to resolve. LRF partnership should continue to consider the ways in which it can influence change over these aspects for the remainder of the pandemic and also into future emergency situations and other contexts. The partnership should also consider learning and planning for these issues into the future.

Leadership within the local context

Discussions of local leadership are mostly positive, particularly in regard to the SCG chair. There is good identification of risks and threats, of information flow between structures, of using technology in a facilitative way and ensuring that meetings are organised and run effectively. There were some issues identified which could further improve the local context. One is the unchallenging nature of the SCGs, they are characterised as quite passive in their nature and this is noted as a possible unintended consequence of using technology. Particularly the norm of being quiet to increase meeting efficiency and turn taking, may unintentionally set a passive participation as the norm. As there are limited non-verbal signals able to be picked up through this medium (as would be available in meeting management face-to-face) delegates felt that contradictory or challenging views may not be being offered. Delegates recognise that this is a hard balance to achieve, but they felt the challenge between SCG membership was an important aspect to retain.

“Discussion and full participation in the meetings. Using teams enables people to listen but not to actively engage, no comments forthcoming in the meeting, generally silence indicating either we've got it completely right or the participant isn't engaged or substituted with another person who can't commit or comment on behalf of the authority. This is a concern. How do we show consensus of decisions if it is by nil response.”

“Not everyone engages with the SCG Gold groups. It would be helpful for people to feel they have a stronger voice and enable them to be 'critical friends' of other services areas.”

There is confidence in the future actions of the management of the pandemic as there has been a lot learnt from the first wave. The delegates mostly described having confidence in the future management despite not having seen detailed integrated plans of capacity across the likely coming demands such as managing the interaction between D20, future waves, outbreak management and concurrent events. How these would be managed together was not known by

delegates, but they had confidence that it would be achieved, despite the concerns for capacity detailed in other themes.

Politics impacting on the local leadership context

The relationship between the LRF and the local political context is strained. The impact that political motivators potentially have on the actions taken during the pandemic suggest a sense that political motivations prevent collaboration. The relationship between the Local Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB) and the LRF was especially salient. Comments about the LOEB also related to a concern about the roles and responsibilities of LOEB and LRF, and the need for greater clarity on these roles. This did not relate exclusively to LOEB, but highlighted the need for partners to be genuinely working together, rather than working alongside each other to the same stated aims. Regarding the political impacts, there are two distinct positions represented in the analysis on the underlying issues. There seems to be little agreement currently as to how to move this on or resolve it.

“Understanding by LRF of those who work within political organisations a real perception of them and us throughout the pandemic. What have the LRF ever done for us? There is a total lack of understanding or knowledge from political Leaders as to the role of the LRF or the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The legal duty of the LRF and the accountability / responsibility of the partnership is lost on most of them or even held in contempt.”

“It felt at times that the Council and Districts wanted to do their own thing and did not want to collaborate with LRF Partners. Recovery was a good example of this, a misplaced focus on getting back to 'business as usual' and a lack of recognition that a second wave was a real possibility.”

“Unsure about how bought in the Elected Members are. It seems that LOEB take action without considering LRF. Again I am unclear what powers / stat responsibilities LOEB have to be taking action but in any case it generally seems to be done in isolation.

I don't believe elected members are bought in at all. Experience so far seems to be very little acknowledge of LRF and instead a lot of single agenda issues raised and commented by elected members on the whole.”

“Making sure that county and district members are equally and appropriately briefed is important. It has felt at times that where cells have been moved to LCC lead, their CLT and members are briefed before the wider partnership has been engaged - which isn't helpful.”

“Political issues comment expansion: what the LRF does is of huge importance, getting it right for our residents puts councillors at the heart of a) needing to understand what's happening and why and b) needing assurance that what is being done is appropriate. officers from political organisations working within the LRF do so as officers of their respective council and therefore are still accountable within that. Other agencies do not have the same governance arrangements. This is especially an issue leading up to elections next May. It links to a wider issue about understanding when work is 'day job' for an organisation and therefore can be left in the hands of that organization without undue oversight and challenge by the SCG – they can use other assurance mechanisms without duplicating these.”

Leadership and strategy from structures

Looking to the effectiveness of how the different structures within the LRF work together across their portfolios of responsibility, there was some discussion regarding communication (as discussed in other themes) but also discussion highlighting an initial lack of collective agreed strategy in the early days of the pandemic. Discussion of how to resolve points of strain or lack of clarity were also present, mostly focussed on the strategic operating level and objectives of the SCG. These were described as taking a while to develop initially and this caused duplication and conflict between structures, notably the TCG and SCG. The delegates were keen to highlight that these are now in place, but that they should be reviewed regularly. One of the reasons for the regular review is the observation that the TCG and SCG currently have too much overlap. The strategic level of the SCG should be raised and reserved to strategy only, excluding operational planning or coordinating. This is the sphere of the TCG. By reserving the level of discussion at the SCG to strategic only, it should allow the TCG to fulfil its role and reduce duplication and conflict.

“Pretty well – it has an established TCG who are working hard. The SCG does need to ensure that the strategic direction is properly reviewed regularly (once a month?) and that it the SCG that reviews and not a task given to the TCG to do. Needs to be clear strategic direction on the key tasks for other groups. The SCG structure needs though to empower these groups to take ownership and accountability for the ongoing work especially given the need for some strategic direction on the recovery agenda. Set the parameters and then let people go! But ensure effective reporting loops.”

By resolving this, delegates felt that the strategic leadership from the structures of the LRF would become clearer, more effective, reduce conflict between structures and increase the effectiveness of all the structures, including the cells.

Mental health strategy and transparency of activities surrounding mental health

The leadership of the mental health portfolio was discussed throughout the different questions in different contexts by delegates. This focussed on the transparency of the activities taking place in relation to mental health and wellbeing and the sharing of information. Both of which (transparency and information sharing) were viewed as limited. Delegates reflect that there may be lots of activity going in this area, but they are not given this information nor are they made aware of how the activities are coordinated. Delegates also reflect that this might be an unintended consequence of the meetings or structures not regarding and identify it as the high priority it should be, as the role and responsibility of that meeting is not directly related to mental health and wellbeing. There was discussion about the connectivity of the mental health cell with other cells and LRF structures and associated organisations with the wider partnership. Specifically, there were challenges with the flow of information, not receiving appropriate membership or representation on other cells and structures to enable effective briefing or decision-making, and the coordination of support already in play or pipelined was not transparent. The transparency and awareness of other partners to see and connect with these activities is essential for a coordinated effort to support the communities of Lincolnshire.

“Having the right offer for MH issues in 'normal' times is never enough. We raised the MH impacts at the beginning of this pandemic as a risk. Whilst acknowledged not sure if we have even touched the sides yet as to the plans and how we can deliver them.”

“I think there is a huge amount of mental health support work going on. Sometimes it feels as if there is an attitude that if the LRF doesn't know about it isn't happening which is plainly not the case. However, some degree of pulling this intelligence together would be useful, not in order to give assurance to a TCG/SCG but just so we can all see very transparently how much we are all doing on this agenda.”

“There needs to be consistent representation from someone who understands population mental health and the mental health connected strategies across the county to drive this. urgently.”

“The mental health cell is critical - both for communities and staff. As we move through response phase 2 and then recovery again it will be even more critical that we know a) what intelligence, both data and anecdotal information, is telling us about the mental health and wellbeing of our communities and areas we may need to target for support and b) what support is out there. It's really important that we keep this conversation going and that we target resources in the right way. Very difficult to get information to or from this cell.”

“There are a lot of expectations of the mental health response but no real clarity on what is required or who is best placed to respond. The Mental Health Trust is not resourced to provide an operational response that meets all expectations and it is not enough to assume that everyone who has a mental health need resulting from the pandemic should or could be seen by secondary mental health services. This would not be appropriate. We need a better conversation about mental health other than "you didn't attend the meetings consistently" which is why collegiate working is the preference - it shouldn't exist only in LRF, perhaps the LRF is not adequately connected to mental health developments across the county.”

“The LRF via different outlets and cells have attempted to engage with several representatives of the mental health "cell" multiple times to gather a picture of mental health in the county and were met with hostility for questioning that work was ongoing, but it is yet to be seen.

Hi, I agree. There are a range of agencies (also engaged with the LRF work) that have a role to play in supporting mental health and this isn't just about having the trust at every meeting but about all of us being able to express how we support the community with mental health needs when they arise. An example of this is the LCC commissioned wellbeing service which has objectives around supporting social interaction and addressing lower level mental health needs by connecting people into their communities.

The coordination, leadership and transparency of these cross-partnership activities was a clear priority for the delegates.

Recommendations for Leadership and Strategy

Recommendation 3.1: The LRF must draw on its experience of the ongoing national emergency to rethink its approach to responding to emergencies in the local context within a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous operating environment and be resilient in the absence of clear national support or guidance. Current and future threats may inhibit or disable the function of national government or at least see a deviation from currently agreed guidance and standard operating procedures. This necessitates a review of the LRFs operating framework, asset and resource capabilities and a willingness to develop agile responses to emerging threats in shorter timescales than any envisaged over the lifetime of its existence.

Recommendation 3.2: The pandemic and other similar emergencies challenge the accepted norms of working together in a single environment to tackle an emergency. To ensure the effectiveness of multi-agency participation, active engagement and participatory collective decision-making in both the SCG and TCG environments when using virtual meeting platforms, the LRF should consider what protocols, training and exercising is needed to maximise engagement and contributions from partners around the virtual table.

Recommendation 3.3: At a local level, the LRF must make friends before it needs them. The experience of Covid-19 has exposed weaknesses in the relationships the LRF has with its elected bodies and members. The LRF must develop a strategy that ensures the legislative role of the LRF is fully understood within the local political context. During an emergency there are clearly understood lines of communication that ensure cohesive political support to ensure democratic and community cohesion in a crisis.

Recommendation 3.4: The LRF must assure itself that the distinction between the roles and responsibilities of the SCG and TCG is clearly articulated and fully understood by all partners. This includes clarity around the triggers for standing up the different forums during the initial phases of an emergency and how the strategic objectives and activity of the multi-agency response are initially developed, and how they will be regularly reviewed and updated.

N.B. For recommendations focussing on mental health strategy and transparency of activities surrounding mental health, see the recommendations under the Impacts on People and Relationships.

Impacts on LRF Partnerships : Finding Four

Delegates discussed the impacts on the relationships within and across the LRF partnership and details the positive and negative aspects of these impacts. This theme has four subthemes. The relationships between the LRF partnership and the relationships within the LRF are equally proportionate contributing to the overall theme. Partnership relationships make up the next largest contribution and partnerships with health makes up the remaining contribution to the overall theme.

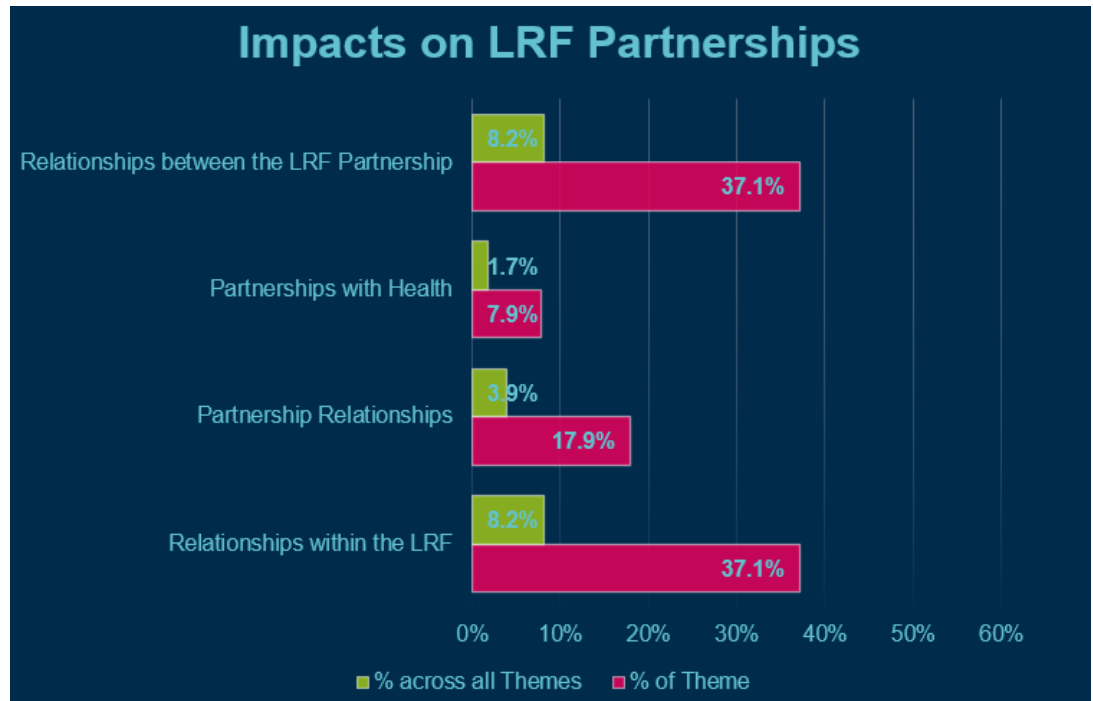


Figure 8: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes in the overall theme of Impacts on LRF Partnerships (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Relationships within the LRF

This subtheme discusses the LRF partnership and how it is supported by the organisations and sectors who form that partnership. Multi-agency working discusses the positive aspects of relationships and partnerships across the LRF. This includes the offering and support provided by successful mutual aid, the sound allocation of staff to essential roles and the consensus that across the structures, skillsets were used and allocated to the right roles. This success is partly due to the buy in and support from organisations, although this was not consistent (as detailed in another theme above and in the theme of resources further on in the report), however the team approach, the genuine multi-agency working, across the partnership is identified by many as the biggest contributor to success, and biggest threat to failure, in the effective management of the pandemic across Lincolnshire.

“Need for EVERYONE to take this seriously and not to be siloed in thinking.”

“Organisations willingness to support with Mutual Aid has been good - it has been challenging to provide in some cases and organisation’s positions can change... and organisations will need to be respected if their position does change (and they cant support) ... this wont be because they don’t want to, more that resilience is an issue.”

“Good input from the right experts who were freed up by their organisations to input.”

“There is a need to ensure that the right people are involved in the teams though to make the best use of their particular skill set.”

“I worry about how joined up we are with health partners on the ground. it still feels a bit of a battle to find the right person. I would be interested to know if health felt the same about LA staff.”

The investment of partner organisations into the partnership of the LRF is essential to the management of the pandemic, but also to the multi-agency working that has been identified by delegates as a success factor to date. The challenge in investment, understanding and role clarity seems to cluster around the newer structures such as the LOEB. This might be a consideration of the LRF partnership going forward, to address how the multi-agency partnership can be extended and inclusive of the new structures as smoothly and productively as possible.

Partnership Relationships

This subtheme discusses the relationships between individual partners within the LRF partnership. These were mostly challenges that were identified as being created by individual organisations or sectors. The first is the arcing of structures, where briefings and decisions are being made outside of the governance structures of the LRF and the Civil Contingencies Act. This was discussed by delegates mostly in relation to Chief Executives arcing the SCG. This needs to be resolved or accommodated. One suggestion was the re-allocation of membership to ensure decision-makers are at the SCG with sufficient power to make decisions on behalf of their organisations.

““The SCG/LRF leads on the response and it can be frustrating that decisions that can be made at SCG need to go through other meetings and bureaucratic structures before the decision can be made.

There have been comments made within SCG that things will be taken outside the SCG to, for example, Leaders and Chief Exec meetings. Effectively this then excludes some partners. Surely, if the Chief Execs wish to be involved they should be a member of the SCG and/or empower people who attend on their behalf to make decisions.”

This arcing of governance also relates to the perception of isolation of the LOEB. Delegates' discussions suggest that this group are not connecting with the other LRF structures and that this is causing confusion or conflicting direction. This should be resolved as soon as possible and the decision flow should be clarified and a shared understanding achieved.

“Unsure about how bought in the Elected Members are. It seems that LOEB take action without considering LRF. Again I am unclear what powers / stat responsibilities LOEB have to be taking action but in any case it generally seems to be done in isolation”

Delegates were clear in their discussions relating to this subtheme that the partnership and good working relationships make the LRF partnership work. This was a clear priority and valued highly when they are working well. This includes working collaboratively within the approved lines of decision-making and affording both respect and accountability with those of different professions or across different sectors.

"The importance of the partnership and the willingness of us all to play our part."

"The balance between the health response i.e. primary partners, and other supporting responses such as business and economy. The system is structured well, and the system allows input from all relevant partners."

"Gaining more understanding of partnerships and agencies that have opened more doors. building and facilitating an environment of trust across all agencies recognition of staff for their hard work and effort whilst the pandemic is still ongoing."

"The commitment and speed with which partner agencies are able to work together to find solutions to issues and risk as they arise. The skills and knowledge that individual agencies have allow for robust and challenging discussions that, in my experience, have led to good understanding and agreement of our common purpose and objectives as a result."

Partnerships with Health

This subtheme focusses on the relationship between the LRF structures and the health structures. Delegates pointed to some gaps in understanding around how the NHS operates and the governance under which they operate, and how this relates to the LRF. Health are reported to be isolated and distant from the LRF structures. The discussion focusses particularly on the limited membership of health representatives in LRF structures. In this way the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) membership, whilst useful, limits the range, scope, depth and relationships needed from a wider membership from the health structures. The bidirectional flow of information, knowledge and participation in partnerships is perceived to be acting as a bottle neck by this limited, restricted membership. Limiting the membership to just the CCG creates a strangle hold and appears to be threatening the relationship of the wider partners with the health structures. A wider membership should be implemented to allow information, expertise and knowledge to flow more freely between the health structures and the LRF structures.

"Health still appears to be covering up their issues and not sharing with the LRF. Comments like "No, everything's fine" and the next "we're struggling" doesn't help anyone. Why can't they be more truthful and transparent?"

"There is a lack of understanding too of the NHS assurance framework which is at a regional level. The SCG is not responsible for assuring NHS plans. Or that of any of the partner organisations. Regional assurance into the national team at a time of a National level 4 Incident is how the internal command and control structure. The SCG is a co-ordinating group of resources to support the lead responding organisation."

"I think as it is very much a health based emergency, it would have been better to have all agencies (ULHT/LCHS/LPFT) represented around the table rather than an overarching body in the form of the CCG. This is not a criticism of the CCG and is suggested so that we are all getting first hand and proximate information and a shared understanding of the risks which are being identified. We have had communications from within the health providers which shows that information is not being passed back from SCG meetings to those being represented."*

**United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust/Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust/Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust*

It does not go unnoticed that there are significant challenges to this. The volume of health structures to represent is a challenge in and of itself, as well as their differing geographical footprints across which they operate, which do not align with the geographical footprint of those organisations across the rest of the LRF partnership. There is also the challenge of the differing emergency management structure embedded throughout the health structures, the architecture of which does not align readily with the civic emergency management structures. There is also a coordination challenge of health structures spanning across the voluntary, community, statutory and private sectors. The challenge of the differing aspects within the NHSE ecology (e.g. the management and governance of acute and community services operate quite differently) which do not align readily in a systemic emergency such as a pandemic. These challenges are partly built within the system design and need national change to resolve. However, the local context should consider these challenges and look to resolve or minimise their impacts as much as possible.

One aspect of the wider health ecology which was seen positively was the public health team. This team was viewed as valuable through their professional skillsets, analysis and the local nature of the team, as delegates identified a clear benefit in the team knowing the local context of their communities. However, delegates expressed a view that this team should generate analysis and synthesise data and information with other partners more readily. The description of their activities was very much disseminating their knowledge and intelligence, rather than integrating or generating it with partners to create a richer, more holistic picture. This could be worked towards in the future.

Relationships between the LRF Partnership

This subtheme focusses on the people who most frequently form the LRF partnership and their impact on the wider partnership across the LRF structures and partner organisations. Mostly, the delegates were significantly impressed and supported by the strength of the partnership across individuals, teams and organisations. The benefit of a core team to facilitate the processes, teams, roles and relationships in the management of the pandemic. This subtheme also highlights the value of identifying and addressing gaps in knowledge or understanding about the partnership or an organisation. The individual commitment from people in those roles and the leadership shown all contribute to the multi-agency working.

“An unbelievable amount of great work being done at Cell level, so many people contributing across such a wide variety of tasks.

The TCG has been led well and is very organised with a good spread of agencies.”

“Challenging conversations which in my view is a sign of a strong partnership.”

“There has been some excellent information and intelligence sharing and good presentation of complex issues. The commitment of members of the group has been excellent.”

“Excellent partnership working and sharing of information between different agencies, county and district colleagues.”

Within the structures and the cells in particular, the consistency of the people within the roles has aided the LRF partnership to manage Covid-19 by providing stability of organisational memory.

“Lack of continuity at times due to 'two team' approach, and also when staff are replaced within roles.

Agree that this has caused disruption and a lack of consistency and contribution.”

“Different attendees from the same organisation has, on occasion, led to differing views presented. Members of TCG need to be clearer that they are attending as representatives of their organisation to need to present their views as such and not their own personal opinions. They also need to speak to each other in their respective organisations so they come to the table with a common set of organisational priorities and objectives. Otherwise we end up in very reactive discussions which result in them thinking they need another briefing paper on an issue as opposed to having the knowledge in the room to make the decision that is required.”

The strength of partnership working was also discussed as being able to bring differing views or expertise together, using all of them and creating a collaboration or decision which is well informed and stands up to challenge.

“There always seemed to be good engagement from partners at the tactical level.

Generally found TCG to be very supportive when I have needed them. When moving at such pace they have often needed briefing very quickly. Sometimes the matter does get kicked along the road a bit but in the end they do seem open to listening to and taking on board evidence that is presented (even if this challenges them and their own perceptions on the issue).”

“I think partners should all be congratulated on their patience and understanding at times. It's difficult to understand how the CEC operates at times and whilst it wasn't always a smooth journey, it was made easier by the understanding and the approach by all remote partners when there were either differences of opinion, technical difficulties, changes of personnel or other curve balls....”

“Understanding the impact we are actually making as a partnership. We are doing lots of things but are they helping us deliver our objectives.”

Delegates commented on the individual commitment from those in key roles and those working across the structures of the LRF, as well as core teams, such as those in the TCG. These individuals and teams are making a significant contribution to the partnership management of Covid-19 and the greater LRF partnership is being maintained by the multi-agency partnership working skills and approaches of these people and others. Over such a long timeframe this is a significant achievement noted by delegates and one which directly benefits the communities of Lincolnshire through the increased effective management of Covid-19 across the county.

Recommendations for Impacts on LRF Partnerships

Recommendation 4.1: The LRF should review the membership of the LRF and SCG forums to ensure it is satisfied partner agencies can field representatives with the appropriate decision-making authority to assure the efficacy and effectiveness of the SCG during the multi-agency response to a major emergency.

Recommendation 4.2: The LRF should develop effective strategies to engage with new and emerging response and recovery structures such as Local Outbreak Engagement Boards (LOEBs) and proactively engage with them to secure mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each forum and how to work together and maintain shared situational awareness during an emergency.

Recommendation 4.3: The LRF and strategic health partners must engage with partners at the local and regional level to share the experiences reported by delegates, promote understanding of the LRF and health structures and identify how it can work more effectively with health partners to protect Lincolnshire from the impacts of local or national threats.

Resources : Finding Five

This theme covers the concerns that delegates raised regarding resources in the immediate and longer-term management of the pandemic. This has three subthemes. As can be seen by the three subthemes the concern for resources takes up the largest percentage of the theme. Resource considerations took up the second largest proportion of the theme and discussions concerning Resilience Direct took up the smallest proportion of the overall theme.

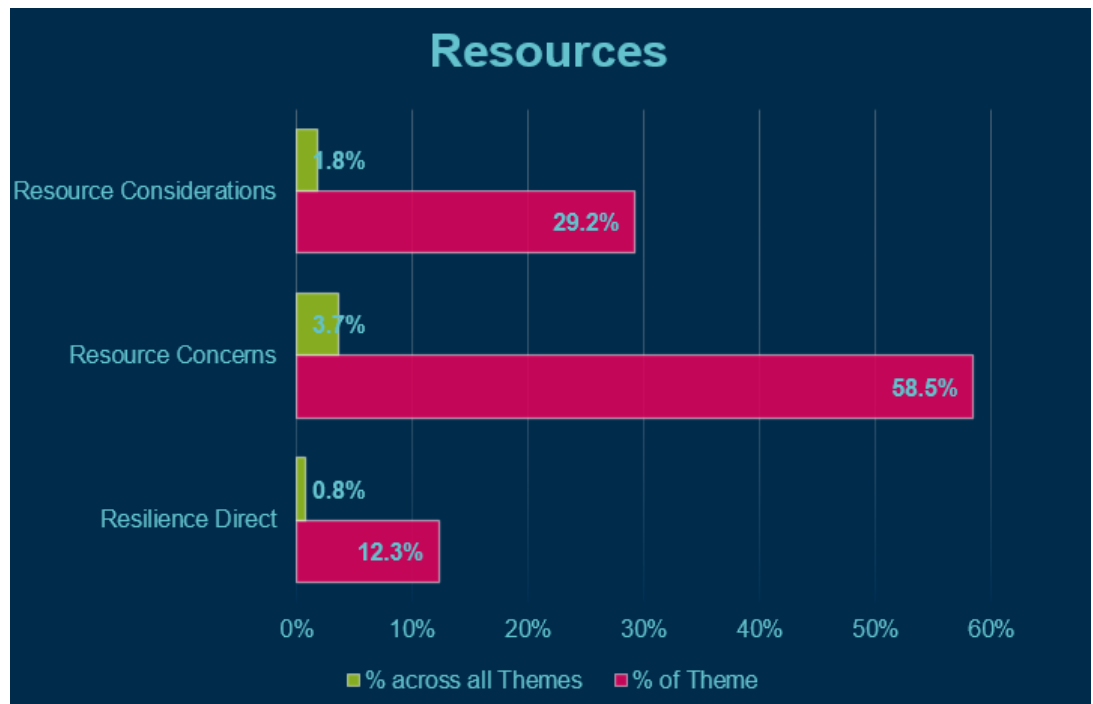


Figure 9: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes in the overall theme of Resources (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Resilience Direct

This subtheme is smaller than the others but is included here as it is highlighted by delegates as a very divisive theme. Some find the resource helpful and others find the resource very limiting and hard to engage with. As an ongoing resource across the LRF, it is included here as a point of consideration for the LRF going forward for the remaining management of the pandemic and future emergencies. The delegates have highlighted the strong information sharing and knowledge management across the LRF. The resources used to support and facilitate this in future emergencies is therefore a point to consider, how these integrate across the knowledge management in order to provide a shared accessible common picture should be considered by the LRF. This subtheme captures the delegates' perceived supportive and unsupportive aspects of Resilience Direct. The aspects perceived as beneficial includes the ability to share information, and the ability to map and identify resource gaps. The challenges included that it is cumbersome to navigate and needs to be regularly circumvented with emails.

Resource Concerns

This subtheme captures the concern that staff resources are becoming increasingly strained. This is through the limited staff availability, the pinch points in staffing levels, the limitation of staffing levels and staff wellbeing which limits the capacity to continue the management of Covid-19 and other concurrent events. The ability of the partnership to progress well in to the immediate, mid and longer term is dependent on the people that participate and populate the structures. There are pinch points of leave, rest, personal recovery which impact

on staff availability and energy levels. This is made more precarious by the significant challenges presented by the threat on staff wellbeing. Moving forward, these aspects need further consideration and planning.

*“Concern is that the LRF will run out of people / burnout those that are involved.
All orgs are stretched and unable to provide more personnel resources.
Concurrent exercise showed this to be the case.*

Pinch points and bottlenecks in resources and timing of incidents is of concern.

Resilience may be a real issue with staffing in particular given staff have been in incident for some two years in some cases - the impact of working remotely may work in a positive way but may also provide further challenges (as the effects of Covid19 working continues).”

“Capacity in all organisations is a challenge given pressures to deliver on other risk areas of business.”

“The plans are fine it’s finding the resources to deliver them when staff could be impacted by the same virus.”

“I am concerned about a concurrent emergency and the resources required to manage this. People are spread thin as it is and are becoming tired and disheartened by the length of the C19 emergency. To pile additional emergencies on top of this risks people reaching a breaking point and falling over.”

Many of the resource concerns related specifically to staff, however some comments referred more generally to having capacity limits that participants thought would affect their ability to respond as the pandemic progresses, and through concurrent incidents. The primary concern for resourcing was staffing. Not having enough staff to respond effectively, but also pertained to staff losses and staff having space to rest given they have been working hard for a long time. Concern for staff wellbeing was specified as concerns of staff burnout, anxiety, and mental health due to working hard for such a continuous period.

Resource Considerations

This subtheme captures the flow of resources offered by partners in to the LRF. The buy in, the offering of resources, the sustainability of resources, resource drains and the resource blocks. As the emergency goes on for longer, so the resources within the network get depleted and drained. This means that there is less resource moving forward, at a time where a second wave and third lockdown means more resource is needed.

“As emergency progresses, difficult to get wider partnership support with staff and resources.”

“Appreciate that each organization has it's own capacity pressures but the LRF/ SCG needs to provide strategic capacity to drive key work-streams.”

“Unwillingness of some LRF agencies to support cell membership and activities.

I do agree with this. It was a struggle getting some agencies to support with resources where other agencies were fully involved every time.”

Delegates suggested that resourcing was a key challenge for all organisations, with the resilience of the workforce being a key issue in Lincolnshire (see above). It was felt that future long-term resourcing plans are needed which takes account

of possible potential concurrent emergencies as well as high Covid-19 demand, non-Covid demand and integrates these to plan capacity.

Delegates suggested that securing the resource commitment from partner organisations initially to populate the LRF structures and throughout the pandemic to date has been a continual challenge. Partner organisations have found it a stretch to provide the resources (namely staff) to populate the structures. As the pandemic has progressed, this has meant that the resource levels have continuously been unpredictable, consequently this has impacted on the effectiveness and the ability to plan into the future.

Recommendations for Resources

Recommendation 5.1: The LRF needs to consider how to overcome the limitations of Resilience Direct and ensure it is utilised as the sole secure platform for providing and maintaining shared situational awareness and decision logging or consider utilising an alternative platform such as MS Teams, recognising the risks and drawbacks of deviating from the national platform.

Recommendation 5.2: The LRF must conduct a stocktake and review of its people and asset capabilities to deal with large scale multi-month emergencies such as a pandemic. In short, its resourcing capacity and capability have not been planned and trained to deliver against the reasonable worst cases for a range of national threats. The LRF must ensure it has a resilient physical, digital and human resource capability to match its core responsibilities.

Summary of Main Findings and Conclusions

This was the first local review to capture Lincolnshire's response to Covid-19. This was carried out at the time point where Lincolnshire had entered into national lockdown measures for the second time. The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed gaps in Lincolnshire LRF's capabilities. These were mostly aligned to clarity and knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the LRF structures and those emergency management structures which have been developed in response to the pandemic (such as the LOEB for example). Clarifying how these structures relate and operate with one another is a crucial understanding, to establish communication and decision flow and also to relationship build in order to effectively manage the volume and complexity of decision-making across Lincolnshire. Understanding how health structures align, interact and maximising the relationships with the LRF is also of crucial importance moving forward. The geographical sizing, the restricted membership of health structures within the partnership structures and the differences in alignment and governance structures between the health structures and LRF partnership structures is challenging.

Main Findings

The five main themes were presented based on the analysis. These main themes are;

- 1) The main theme of Developing for the Future had two subthemes, which were developing the LRF and facilitating the LRF Partnership.
- 2) Impacts on People and Relationships had two subthemes. These were impacts on people and impacts on Lincolnshire.
- 3) Leadership and Strategy had five subthemes. These were Government support and leadership, leadership within the local context, politics impacting on the local leadership context, strategy and leadership and mental health strategy and transparency of activities surrounding mental health.
- 4) Impacts on LRF Partnerships had four subthemes. These were relationships within the LRF, partnership relationships, partnerships with health and relationships between the LRF partnership.
- 5) The main theme of resources had three subthemes. These include a subtheme focussing on Resilience Direct, a subtheme outlining resource concerns and a subtheme detailing the resources needed going forward.

This report has presented each of those themes and their associated sub-themes, detailing 22 recommendations that have been developed from those themes. The recommendations contain focussed points of action which would support the LRF to develop in to the immediate, mid and longer term future. They are applicable outside of the Covid-19 context as well as being relevant to the remaining management of the pandemic.

Conclusions of the Review Process

This review took place in real time during response. It is rare that such a review has happened mid response, and in Lincolnshire, a review has not been completed during response which brings in the breadth of partners across the LRF area. This means the learning contained in this report is important and unique as it is mid-incident.

Summary of Recommendations

Developing for the Future: Finding One

Recommendation 1.1: The LRF should ensure it has a mutually agreed competency and training framework which clearly articulates the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each LRF partner agency in supporting the multi-agency response to provide the capacity and capability to deal with the threats identified in its local risk register and National Security Risk Assessment.

Recommendation 1.2: The LRF should maintain a competency and CPD register for all staff expected to work in the SCG/TCG environment, with a particular focus on key roles such as SCG/TCG Chair, Command Support Manager or MAIC Chairperson.

Recommendation 1.3: The underpinning LRF Training and Exercise Programme should be informed by a Learning Needs Analysis. The Learning Needs Analysis should be informed by the National Security Risk Assessment and the new and emerging structures and ways of working developed during the pandemic, as well as being informed by the personal experiences of those involved in the multi-agency response.

Recommendation 1.4: The LRF Training and Exercise Programme should include a means of rapidly onboarding new staff before and during an emergency response.

Recommendation 1.5: To better understand what worked well and identify specific areas for development, the LRF should undertake a specific debrief of the efficacy of the both the warning/informing and wider communication functions of the multi-agency response during sustained emergencies. This should include consideration of the interactions between the local and national communication strategies and the role of the local media. The LRF Training and Exercise Programme should include a specific focus on this area to increase transparency of the LRF business and structures.

Recommendation 1.6: Undertake a technology audit to ensure partners can communicate and work together to deal with disaster.

Recommendation 1.7: Building upon the positive experience reported by delegates, the LRF should clarify with partners how it will further develop the capability and resilience of the MAIC in order to mainstream its effective deployment during all future emergencies. In doing so, it should consider the learning and recommendations from the national MAIC review and how the Lincolnshire MAIC engages horizontally with other MAICs operating in other LRF areas and vertically with any regional or national MAIC structures.

Recommendation 1.8: To improve the efficacy of the multi-agency response and promote shared situational awareness, the LRF should ensure it has arrangements to afford all responding agencies, regardless of location, ready access to key operating documents such as strategic objectives, situational reports and a visual representation of the command, control, and communication structures of the SCG, TCG and supporting cells, along with their specific terms of reference and who is represented on them. It should clarify who is responsible for establishing and maintain the currency of this vital information and that all partners are aware of how to access it.

N.B. This recommendation links to recommendation 3.4.

Impacts on People and Relationships: Finding Two

Recommendation 2.1: As the LRF has a primary responsibility for not just responding to an emergency but also co-ordinating the recovery from its impacts, the LRF should clarify who is co-ordinating both the assessment of the psychological impacts of an emergency on its communities and the multi-agency response to mitigate the impacts on the most at risk.

Recommendation 2.2: The LRF should work with government and other LRFs and LAs to identify leading/good practice and available tools to identify and map the impact of the pandemic on community cohesion, vulnerabilities and solidarity. This will inform the priorities of the immediate recovery work in this area.

Recommendation 2.3: The LRF should establish a multi-agency duty of care framework that goes beyond the current provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, so agencies work together and can provide mutual aid to support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all staff involved in the multi-agency response to emergencies. This should include engaging with appropriate mental health professionals to advise on the approach.

Recommendation 2.4: The LRF should consider ways in which they, and other partners, can publicly recognise the exceptional contributions of responders, key workers and their communities during any emergency.

Recommendation 2.5: Recognising the investment needed from partners to sustain the protracted response to the pandemic, the LRF must assure itself that its responsibilities for coordinating the Recovery phase are being effectively led and properly resourced. It must also ensure that stakeholders, including the public, fully understand what is being done, when and by whom to understand and mitigate the longer-term impacts of the pandemic on the communities within Lincolnshire. This includes the role of the mental health cell within the Response structures.

Leadership and Strategy: Finding Three

Recommendation 3.1: The LRF must draw on its experience of the ongoing national emergency to rethink its approach to responding to emergencies in the local context within a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous operating environment and be resilient in the absence of clear national support or guidance. Current and future threats may inhibit or disable the function of national government or at least see a deviation from currently agreed guidance and standard operating procedures. This necessitates a review of the LRFs operating framework, asset and resource capabilities and a willingness to develop agile responses to emerging threats in shorter timescales than any envisaged over the lifetime of its existence.

Recommendation 3.2: The pandemic and other similar emergencies challenge the accepted norms of working together in a single environment to tackle an emergency. To ensure the effectiveness of multi-agency participation, active engagement and participatory collective decision-making in both the SCG and TCG environments when using virtual meeting platforms, the LRF should consider what protocols, training and exercising is needed to maximise engagement and contributions from partners around the virtual table.

Recommendation 3.3: At a local level, the LRF must make friends before it needs them. The experience of Covid-19 has exposed weaknesses in the relationships the LRF has with its elected bodies and members. The LRF must develop a strategy that ensures the legislative role of the LRF is fully understood within the local political context. During an emergency there are clearly understood lines of communication that ensure cohesive political support to ensure democratic and community cohesion in a crisis.

Recommendation 3.4: The LRF must assure itself that the distinction between the roles and responsibilities of the SCG and TCG is clearly articulated and fully understood by all partners. This includes clarity around the triggers for standing up the different forums during the initial phases of an emergency and how the strategic objectives and activity of the multi-agency response are initially developed, and how they will be regularly reviewed and updated.

N.B. For recommendations focussing on mental health strategy and transparency of activities surrounding mental health, see the recommendations under the Impacts on People and Relationships.

Impacts on LRF Partnerships

Recommendation 4.1: The LRF should review the membership of the LRF and SCG forums to ensure it is satisfied partner agencies can field representatives with the appropriate decision-making authority to assure the efficacy and effectiveness of the SCG during the multi-agency response to a major emergency.

Recommendation 4.2: The LRF should develop effective strategies to engage with new and emerging response and recovery structures such as Local Outbreak Engagement Boards and proactively engage with them to secure mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each forum and how to work together and maintain shared situational awareness during an emergency.

Recommendation 4.3: The LRF and strategic health partners must engage with partners at the local and regional level to share the experiences reported by delegates, promote understanding of the LRF and health structures and identify how it can work more effectively with Health partners to protect Lincolnshire from the impacts of local or national threats.

Resources: Finding Five

Recommendation 5.1: The LRF needs to consider how to overcome the limitations of Resilience Direct and ensure it is utilised as the sole secure platform for providing and maintaining shared situational awareness and decision logging or consider utilising an alternative platform such as MS Teams, recognising the risks and drawbacks of deviating from the national platform.

Recommendation 5.2: The LRF must conduct a stocktake and review of its people and asset capabilities to deal with large scale multi-month emergencies such as a pandemic. In short, its resourcing capacity and capability have not been planned and trained to deliver against the reasonable worst cases for a range of national threats. The LRF must ensure it has a resilient physical, digital and human resource capability to match its core responsibilities.

Technical Appendices

This gives further detail and context to the discussions throughout the report.

Appendix 1: Theme and Subtheme Structure of Findings

Finding	Frequency	% of Theme	% across all Themes
Developing for the Future	413		40%
Developing the LRF	145	14%	35%
Facilitating the LRF Partnership	268	26%	65%
Impacts on LRF Partnerships	229		22%
Relationships within the LRF	85	8%	37%
Partnership Relationships	41	4%	18%
Partnerships with Health	18	2%	8%
Relationships between the LRF Partnership	85	8%	37%
Impacts on People and Relationships	118		11%
Impacts on People	69	7%	58%
Impacts on Lincolnshire Communities	31	3%	26%
Transparency for Communities	18	2%	15%
Leadership and Strategy	215		21%
Government Support and Leadership	21	2%	10%
Leadership	101	10%	47%
Politics and Leadership	16	2%	7%
Strategy and Leadership	11	1%	5%
Mental Health Strategy and Transparency	66	6%	31%
Resources	65		6%
Resilience Direct	8	1%	12%
Resource Concerns	38	4%	58%
Resource Considerations	19	2%	29%

Table 2: Theme and Subtheme Structure of Findings

Graphs Showing the Percentages of Codes Contributing to Subthemes and their Main Themes

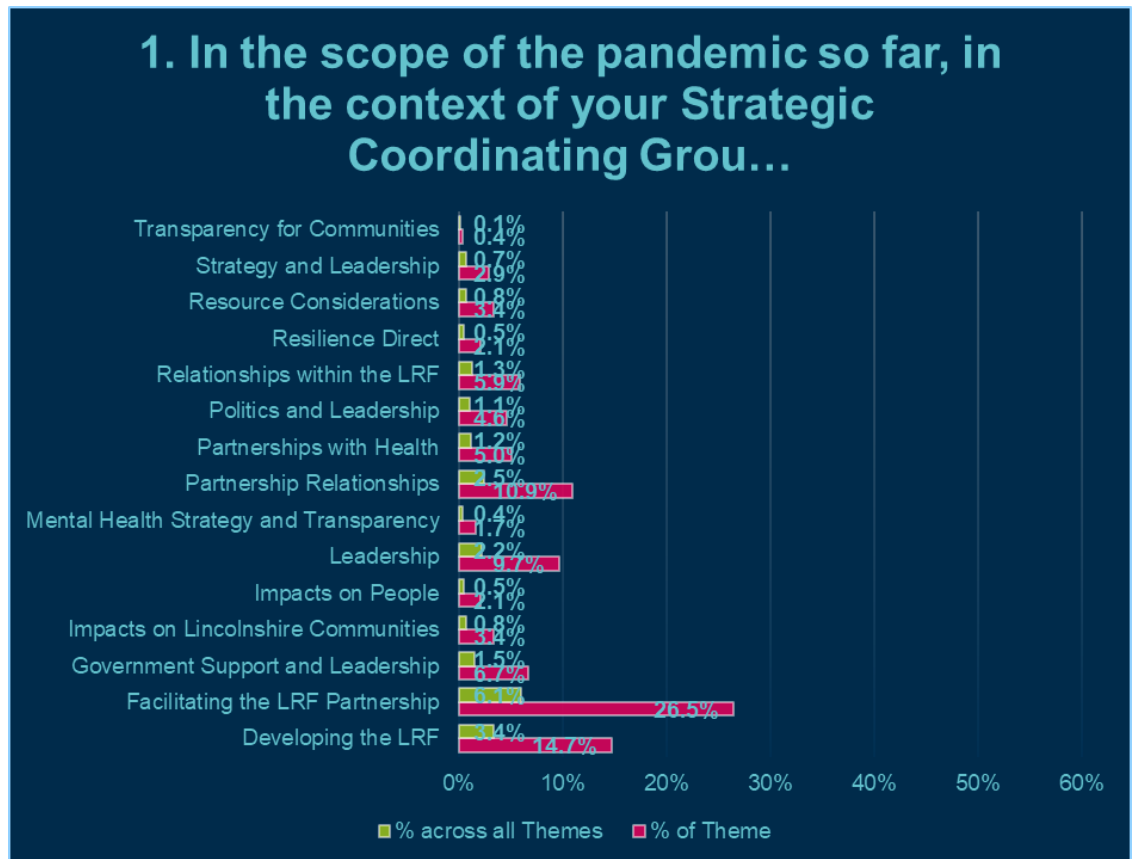


Figure 10: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes taken from Question One.

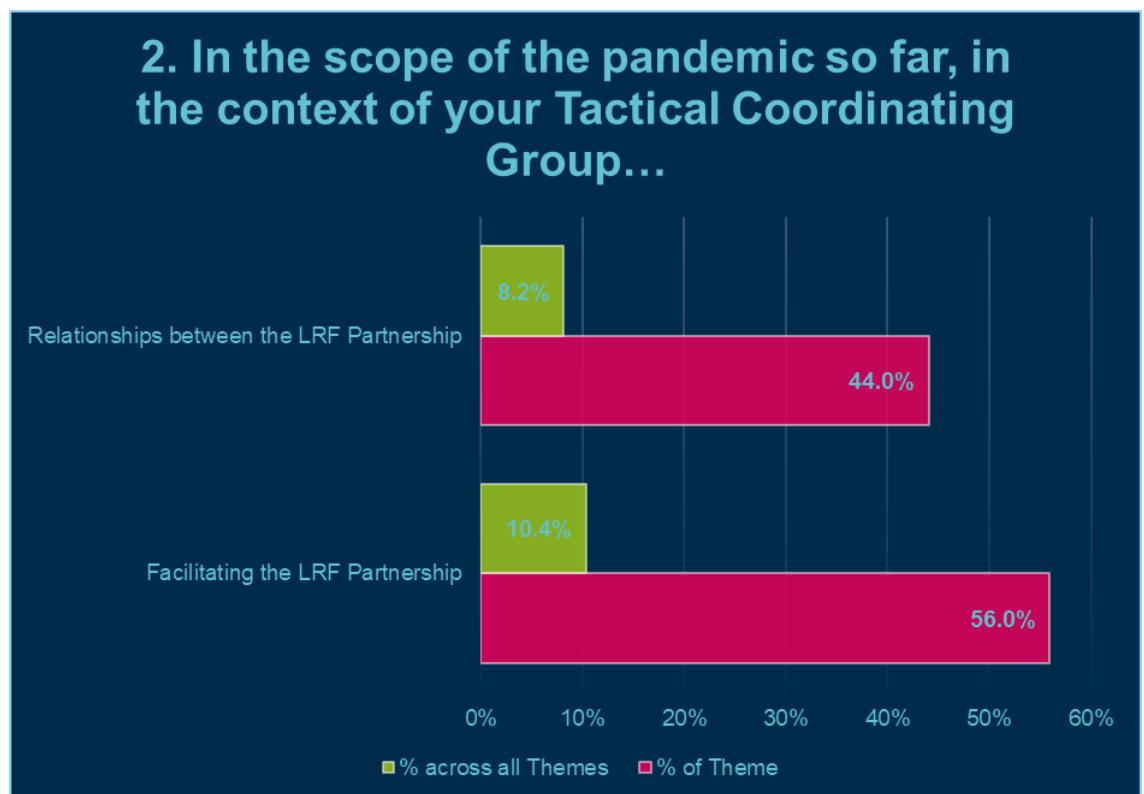


Figure 11: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes taken from Question Two.

3. In the scope of the pandemic so far, in the context of your command support cell structure...

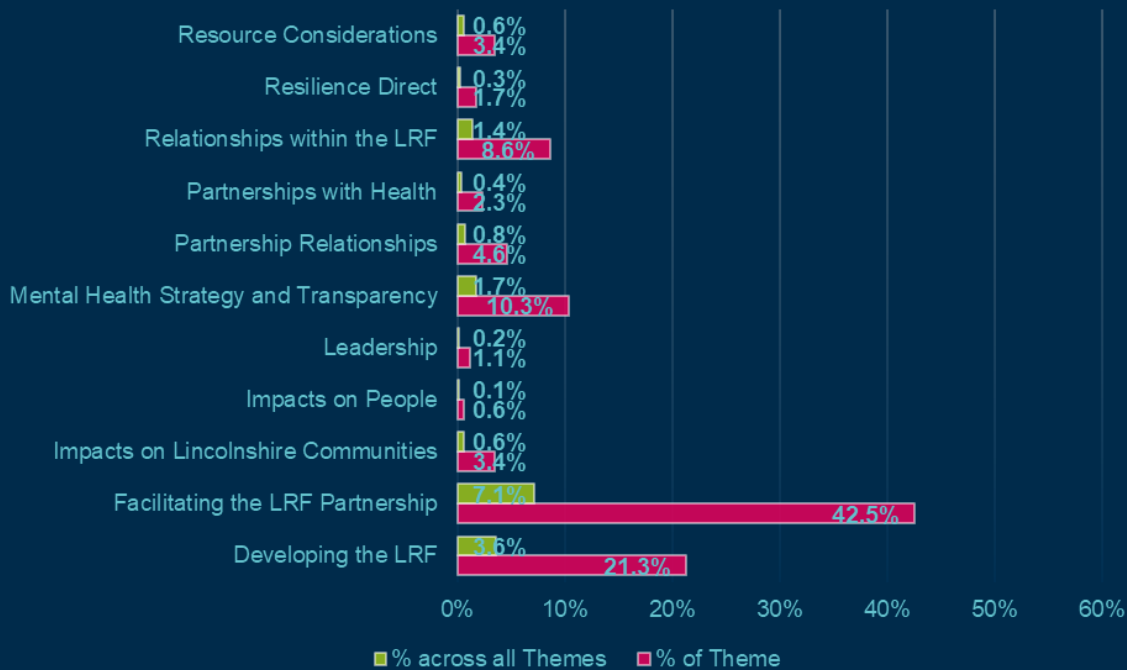


Figure 12: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes taken from Question Three.

4. Forward Look...

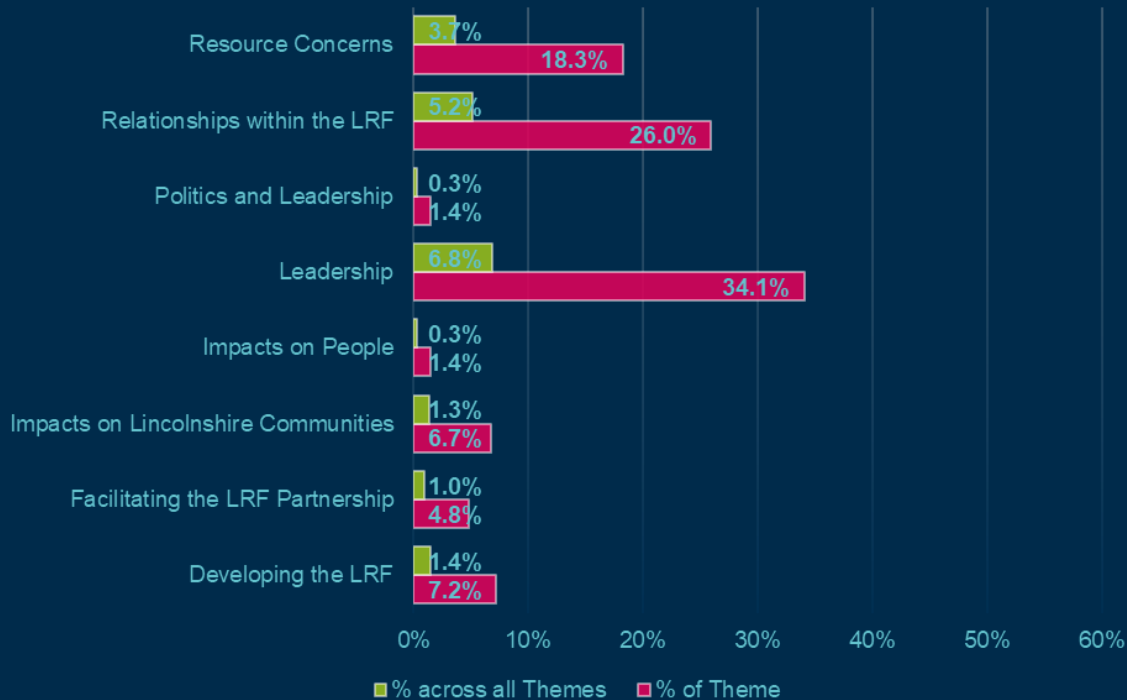


Figure 13: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes taken from Question Four

5. Your legacy contribution to Covid-19...

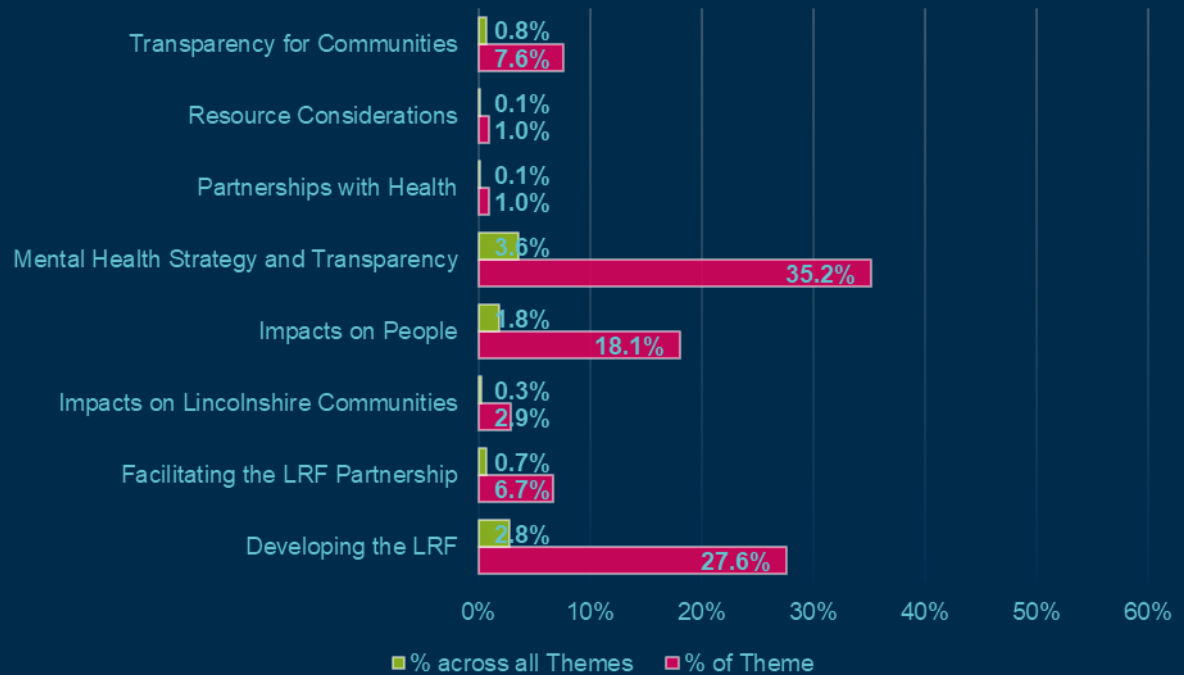


Figure 14: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes taken from Question Five.

6. Personal Reflections & Insights...

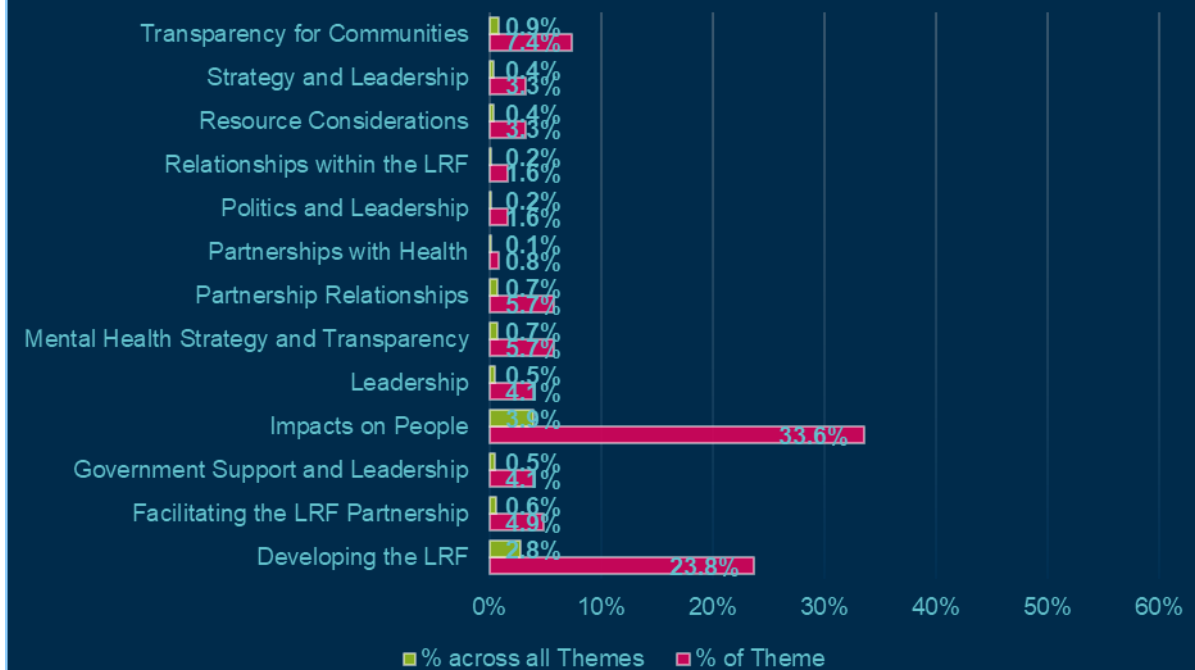


Figure 15: The percentage of the codes generated for each of the subthemes taken from Question Six

Contact Dr Rowena Hill for further information on this report:
rowena.hill@ntu.ac.uk

Copyright © NTU 2021

January 2021

