BUILDING CASH FIRST COMMUNITIES IN THE SOUTH WEST

Shaping how the Crisis and Resilience Fund [CRF] is delivered locally

Tamsin Maule from Cornwall Council shares some top tips for connecting with the relevant person/team in a Local Authority who will be administering the Crisis and Resilience Fund scheme:

1. Start with the "scheme owner". CRF/HSF-style schemes are usually administered within:

- Revenues & Benefits
- Welfare Support / Financial Inclusion teams
- Cost of Living / Community Resilience programmes

2. Use existing partnership networks. CRF guidance strongly encourages local partnership delivery, so the relevant officers are usually already connected to:

- Citizens Advice
- Food insecurity networks
- VCSE alliances
- Safeguarding partnerships

Might be useful to attend local cost of living or welfare forums to obtain direct names and contacts.

3. Most councils are working toward no wrong door access, meaning:

- You don't need the perfect contact straight away
- Any frontline team should route you internally

4. Identify your local "link officer" or partnership lead. Schemes may assign:

- VCSE liaison officers
- Community partnership leads
- Cost of living coordinators

5. Engage early. Cornwall's experience shows the most effective partnerships come from:

- Early engagement during scheme design or refresh
- Not just operational queries once the scheme is live
- Request a short introductory meeting and share what your organisation does and who you reach

6. Be clear about what you need (and what you offer). CRF principles emphasise co-production and local insight.

When reaching out, include:

- The questions or barriers you're encountering
- The volume/type of need you're seeing locally
- How you could help (e.g. referrals, application support, outreach)

7. Make use of elected members when appropriate. Local councillors often:

- Sit on oversight panels
- Have visibility of local welfare schemes

8. Keep it consistent and relationship-based. We, and the scheme, rely on:

- Ongoing relationships, not one-off contacts
- Regular communication between the LA and VCSE sector



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