Internal Audit Report

Governance

Civil Contingencies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (the Act), the Council is defined as a Category 1 responder in the event of an emergency, meaning an event or situation which threatens serious damage to: human welfare; the environment; and / or the security of the United Kingdom (the latter as a result of war or terrorism). The Act requires Category 1 responders, such as the Council, to:

- assess the risk of an emergency occurring from time to time;
- maintain plans, informed by risk assessments, for continuing to perform their functions, including in relation to preventing emergencies, mitigating their effects or taking other necessary action;
- maintain business continuity plans;
- publish all or part of risk assessments and plans, to prevent emergencies occurring; mitigate their effects; and to enable required action to be taken in relation to an emergency;
- maintain arrangements to warn the public and to provide information and advice to the public, if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred;
- co-operate and share information with other responders;
- provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations on business continuity management

The objective of this audit was to provide assurance that the Council has in place adequate training, planning and testing for civil contingency events to ensure that it can deliver on its obligations in the event of an emergency. In general, this was found to be the case. Governance undertook a comprehensive Organisational Resilience stocktake of the Council's Civil Contingency arrangements in 2019, taking the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 into account. Governance arrangements and emergency response procedures were improved as result. An online Resilience Hub is also being developed to centralise relevant information.

Whilst the Council's emergency procedures are clear and concise, there were some elements which could be enhanced: how to assess the risk of emergencies occurring from time to time (statutory requirement); guidance on providing business continuity advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations (statutory requirement); and the Council's procedure for the recovery phase of an incident / emergency. Governance will review and update procedures.

Business Continuity Plans are scheduled for periodic review and testing, however the schedule requires to be updated to demonstrate it is being adhered to. Plans have been activated as necessary in response to COVID-19, and lessons learned are being captured and will be fed into the review process.

The Public Protection Committee receives an annual Resilience report. The Committee's terms of reference also set out that it should receive assurance that services are maintaining and reviewing Business Continuity Plans in accordance with the priorities allocated to them. The Committee has not recently received updates on Business Continuity Plan preparation, review and testing status nor is it receiving a report on the risk of emergencies occurring, emergency plan review and emergency plan testing. Governance will cover emergency and business continuity risks, controls and control gaps as part of further development of the annual Resilience report to the Committee. The next scheduled report is due to be presented to the Public Protection Committee in December 2020.

Corporate Risk Corp-004 Civil Contingencies is set out as "The Council must ensure that it puts in place adequate training, planning and testing for civil contingency events

and other incidents". This is monitored by CMT regularly, supported by ECMT and the Council's Organisational Resilience Group (ORG).

In addition, the CMT recently agreed to develop the civil contingencies risk register into a Place register, and to expand this to include all operational civil contingencies events covered by civil contingencies legislation. This will ensure that all appropriate controls are in place for each scenario and will complement the scrutiny of civil contingencies risks at the LRP. This will be overseen by the ORG on which it will base its review of such risks in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

The Council fulfils its responsibilities as a Category 1 responder partly through internal structures and reporting but also through its membership of and active participation in the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership (GLRP). The Council's Organisational Resilience Stocktake identified opportunities to enhance the Aberdeen City plans in place, to dovetail with the plans held at GLRP level. Further development of these plans has yet to be scheduled, and will be subject to further consideration.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (the Act), the Council is defined as a Category 1 responder in the event of an emergency, meaning an event or situation which threatens serious damage to: human welfare; the environment; and / or the security of the United Kingdom (the latter as a result of war or terrorism). The Act requires Category 1 responders, such as the Council, to:

- assess the risk of an emergency occurring from time to time;
- maintain plans, informed by risk assessments, for continuing to perform their functions, including in relation to preventing emergencies, mitigating their effects or taking other necessary action;
- maintain business continuity plans;
- publish all or part of risk assessments and plans, to prevent emergencies occurring; mitigate their effects; and to enable required action to be taken in relation to an emergency;
- maintain arrangements to warn the public and to provide information and advice to the public, if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred;
- co-operate and share information with other responders;
- provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations on business continuity management.

1.2 Corporate Risk Corp-004 identifies the requirement for the Council to ensure that it puts in place adequate training, planning and testing for civil contingency events and other incidents.

1.3 The objective of this audit was to provide assurance that the Council has taken the necessary action and has plans in place to mitigate risks identified in the Corporate Risk Register to ensure that it can deliver on its obligations in the event of an emergency.

1.4 The factual accuracy of this report and action to be taken with regard to the recommendations made have been agreed with Fraser Bell, Chief Officer – Governance, Vikki Cuthbert, Assurance Manager, Ronnie McKean, Corporate Risk Lead.

2. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Organisational Resilience Stocktake

2.1.1   In the absence of an independent external inspection regime the council's Governance function commissioned a comprehensive Organisational Resilience Stocktake of the Council's Civil Contingency arrangements in 2019 to obtain management assurance over this area.   This covered all of the Council's statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as detailed in paragraph 1.1, above.   The outcome of this stocktake was reported to CMT on 28 November 2019 where recommendations to improve civil contingency procedures, training, governance arrangements and the means by which the Council ensures it complies with its statutory civil contingency obligations were approved.   Internal Audit has reviewed progress with implementing the associated actions as part of this report.

2.2 Governance

2.2.1   The governance arrangements are multi-layered, including Partnerships at a Regional and Local level, and supporting working groups, within which Aberdeen City Council senior officers have taken lead roles.

North of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (NSRRP)

2.2.2   The Regional Resilience Partnerships cover East, West and North of Scotland areas and these boundaries align with the territorial areas for both Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.   The NSRRP aims to protect the people, economy and environment of the north of Scotland by building resilience and having effective arrangements in place to deal with emergencies.   It supports and coordinates three local Resilience Partnerships, including the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership.

Grampian Local Resilience Partnership (GLRP)

2.2.3   The GLRP's purpose is to maintain effective local liaison and coordination between agencies; to provide strategic direction to the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership Working Group for the development and implementation of a risk register and work plan; and to assist members in delivering their obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Control of Major Accident Hazards 2015, and Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996.

2.2.4   The GLRP supports multi-agency incident planning and response in the region, monitors key and emerging risks, approves regional emergency plans, and monitors their implementation.

2.2.5   The GLRP membership consists of all Category 1 Responders within the North East of Scotland, with attendees being the strategic leads within the organisation they represent or a deputy with delegated authority to agree policy, strategy and to commit financial and other resources.   Category 1 Responders include: the 3 Councils – Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray ; Police Scotland; Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; Scottish Ambulance Service; National Health Service Grampian; Maritime Coastguard Agency; and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. The GLRP was chaired by the Council's Chief Executive between 2015 and 2020.

2.2.6   Category 2 Responders may also attend, including: utilities companies (gas, electricity, telecommunication); rail and air transport operators; the Health and Safety Executive; NHS National Services Scotland, and other organisations depending on the nature of risks and threats emerging.

2.2.7   The GLRP is scheduled to meet twice annually and may also be convened as required e.g. in response to an emergency. GLRP members are also required to attend the NSRRP at least twice annually. The Council has had input to the review and approval of a new structure for the GLRP, its governance arrangements, and the introduction of a multi-agency risk register and action plan.

2.2.8   The GLRP is supported by the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership Working Group (GLRPWG), to develop and undertake a risk register and work plan, based on the strategic direction of the GLRP. This group was chaired by the Council's Chief Officer – Governance between 2017 and 2020.

2.2.9   The GLRPWG is made up of resilient experts from Category 1 responder organisations at the tactical level, ensuring information is shared and work streams are effectively co-ordinated. The group is required to meet at least every 8 weeks to consider national and regional issues and progress GLRP objectives. During preparation for a forecast incident or event, the GLRPWG will come together to ensure a prompt and co-ordinated response.

2.2.10   Following the review of the GLRP structure in February 2020 Liaison Groups (which will meet 6 monthly) and Sub-Groups (which will meet quarterly) are in the process of being established to assist the GLRP in delivering their obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, to: assess the risk of an emergency occurring; maintain relevant multi-agency plans; and maintain arrangements to warn and inform the public where required. Membership varies but generally includes Category 1 and 2 responders as well as other relevant stakeholders. The Council either chairs or has appropriate representation on each group.

Aberdeen City Council

2.2.11   Through representation and reporting at each level the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Extended Corporate Management Team (ECMT) give consideration to the relevant risks and actions.

2.2.12   CMT is supported in doing so through an Organisational Resilience Group (ORG) which has oversight of the Council's arrangements to meet its statutory Civil Contingencies requirements.

2.2.13   From April 2019 to December 2019, CMT discharged the responsibilities of the ORG whilst its terms of reference were reviewed. This included de-briefs of incidents (of which there were few) and commissioning of the Stocktake referenced at 2.1.1 above. CMT also reviewed the civil contingencies risk in the Corporate Risk Register during this period.

2.2.14   Revised terms of reference for the ORG were approved by CMT in November 2019. The group is chaired by the Emergency Planning and Resilience Lead (EPRL) and has responsibility for the following:
     • Reviewing de-brief reports from Incident Management Teams and approving related recommendations;
     • Oversight of subsequent improvement plans;
     • Oversight of plans, including training and exercising of plans; and
     • Risk registers.

2.2.15   ECMT Stewardship was established in January 2020 and took on responsibility for oversight of the ORG. Emergency Planning is a standing item on its agenda. The ORG shares lessons identified following emergency response with Duty Emergency Response Coordinators (DERCs) and reports these to ECMT, and there is evidence of this taking place e.g. in relation to recent flash flooding incidents. Governance advised that between April and December 2019, debriefs from incidents were being reported to CMT directly

rather than going through ORG, whilst the Terms of Reference were under review. These were approved in December 2019. ORG has since met to review action plans and de-beriefs and collaborates on these using a Teams site.

Business Continuity Sub-Group

2.2.16   The Business Continuity Sub-Group is a sub-group of the ORG chaired by the Corporate Risk Lead. The group aims to ensure there is a consistent approach to the Council's approach to business continuity for the purposes of complying with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This includes providing the ORG with assurance that business continuity plans are maintained, tested, promoted and communicated to all stakeholders. The group also intends to identify best practice and improvement opportunities from the testing and review of plans and share these within the Council. Meetings are scheduled to be held quarterly and progress on group activities is required to be reported to the ORG on this basis.

2.2.17   The Business Continuity Sub-Group (BCSG) met regularly in 2019 and progressed the annual review of all plans, discussed the plan that was activated during 2019 (Regional Communication Centre plan in response to lightning strike at Frederick Street) and considered the impact of emerging risks on business continuity plans e.g. EU exit. A work plan was also agreed for 2020 including updating the Council's Business Continuity Policy.

2.2.18   The most recent update by the BCSG to ORG was in February 2020. This covered the 2020 BCSG 2020 work plan progress and the annual review of Business Continuity Plans, including requests to BCSG members to review plans for changes or risks, including loss of staff as a result of COVID-19.

2.2.19   The Council's Business Continuity Policy requires all plans to be reviewed annually and tested in line with the schedule set by Governance. Whilst work had progressed to review and update a number of plans , testing of only three of these plans was concluded in 2019.

2.2.20   The Corporate Risk Lead advised that Council's business continuity plans have been activated in response to the COVID-19 lockdown and that plan holders and owners have been asked to complete a plan assurance questionnaire as a result. These were reviewed for a sample of Clusters which had responded. The questionnaire captures the impact of COVID-19 on service delivery at a Cluster level, covering critical service elements, the impact of loss of staff, single point failures, and related mitigations. The questionnaire also captures whether or not Business Continuity Plans have been updated since activation as required and if not when they will be updated.

2.2.21   A colour coded traffic light system based "Heat Map" spreadsheet has been prepared summarising the plan assurance questionnaire responses, including when BCPs will next be updated. This is a useful tool for highlighting risks that need to be addressed. The Heat Map was reported to ECMT in August 2020; ECMT discussed the data capture in relation to Business Continuity Plans in the context of COVID-19 and agreed to work with the Corporate Risk Lead to finalise the Heat Map. Business Continuity Plans are to be updated by the end of October 2020. The Corporate Risk Lead advised that once the Heat Map is completed work will commence again to test plans under "business as usual" activities.

2.2.22   A recommendation is included to track progress with the review and testing of business continuity plans.

> **Recommendation**
> A schedule of business continuity plan review and test due dates should be prepared, with a reminder to review and test plans where overdue.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Service Response / Action</u>
Agreed. Schedules will be reviewed and placed on the Resilience Hub.

The Business Continuity Sub-Group continued to monitor progress of the review and testing schedule and considered any associated risk with any delays. ECMT will continue to monitor the actions associated with the heatmap to completion in October 2020.</td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Implementation Date</u>
December 2020</td><td><u>Responsible Officer</u>
Corporate Risk Lead</td><td><u>Grading</u>
Significant within audited area</td></tr>
</table>

CMT

2.2.23   CMT Stewardship monitors the Corporate Risk Register on a monthly basis with Corp-004 "Civil Contingencies" covering the Council's statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act. This is considered further under section 2.4 Risk Assessment.

Public Protection Committee

2.2.24   The Public Protection Committee is responsible for monitoring the Council's compliance with its statutory duties in relation to Civil Contingencies. Reports relevant to the Council's Civil Contingency duties were made to the Committee in 2019, including a Resilience annual report which updated the Committee on progress with implementing recommendations of the PREVENT peer review, a programme of work designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, and provided an update on progress implementing the findings of a self-assessment of the Council's resilience arrangements conducted in 2017. Separately the Council's Generic Emergency Plan was also reported to the Public Protection Committee for approval, considered further at 2.3.2 below.

2.2.25   The Committee's terms of reference also set out that it should receive assurance that services are maintaining and reviewing Business Continuity Plans in accordance with the priorities allocated to them. The Committee has not recently received updates on Business Continuity Plan preparation, review and testing status nor is it receiving a report on the risk of emergencies occurring, emergency plan review and emergency plan testing.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Recommendation</u>
The Public Protection Committee should be provided with assurance over Business Continuity Plans.

<u>Service Response / Action</u>
Agreed.   The Resilience Annual Report will continue to be expanded to provide assurance on the management of civil contingencies risks</td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Implementation Date</u>
December 2020</td><td><u>Responsible Officer</u>
Assurance Manager</td><td><u>Grading</u>
Significant within audited area</td></tr>
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2.3   Policies and Procedures

2.3.1   Comprehensive written procedures which are easily accessible by all members of staff can reduce the risk of errors and inconsistency. They are beneficial for the training of current and new employees and provide management with assurance that correct and consistent instructions are available to staff, important in the event of an experienced employee being absent or leaving.

2.3.2   It is acknowledged that the Council fulfils its responsibilities as a Category 1 responder partly through internal structures and reporting but also through its membership of and active participation in the GLRP as discussed in section 2.2 above.

2.3.3   The Council's Generic Emergency Plan (GEP) was produced as part of the Organisational Resilience Stocktake and was approved by the Public Protection Committee in December 2019. The GEP describes the following:
- the Council's responsibilities in an emergency, in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and other relevant legislation and guidance;
- Supporting procedures and documentation (in general terms);
- the roles and responsibilities of the various category 1 and 2 responders;
- emergency response partnership arrangements at a North of Scotland, regional and local level;
- the Council's emergency response structure at a strategic, tactical and operational level;
- the roles and responsibilities of the Council in response to an incident;
- the de-briefing process and arrangements for incident reporting.

2.3.4   The Roles and Responsibilities of the Council as a Category 1 responder under the GEP are as follows:
- support the emergency services and those assisting them;
- provide a variety of support services for the local and wider community;
- maintain normal services at an appropriate level;
- provide a wide range of social care and welfare services, working alone or with public, private and voluntary organisations. Services include care for people, rest centres, temporary accommodation, re-housing and practical support for victims;
- access a wide variety of specialist, scientific, environmental and communications expertise;
- represent the diverse interests of local people and, in so doing, maintain close links with communities through elected members, Community Councils, Community Planning and other formal partnerships;
- have powers to take action to preserve community wellbeing; and
- lead the longer-term recovery and regeneration of affected communities

2.3.5   The GEP is complemented by the following activation packs for the Duty Emergency Response Coordinator (DERC) to follow, which were also developed as a result of the stocktake:
- Generic Initial Actions Activation Pack;
- Generic Flooding Activation Pack;
- Reception Centre Activation Pack (use of Rest Centres); and
- Activating the GLRP Activation Pack.

2.3.6   The DERCs have delegated authority to co-ordinate the strategic response to an emergency on behalf of the Council. Directors and Chief Officers operate as DERCs on a weekly rota basis. If activated by the DERC on-call, the Incident Management Team will provide the tactical response to the emergency and co-ordinate the operational "hands-on" work at the scene of the incident.

2.3.7   The activation packs provide concise instructions for the DERC on how to respond to reported incidents, including flowcharts and checklists covering the formation of an incident management team; contact details, roles and responsibilities of incident management team members; media holding statements; and how to scale up or down the response as required, depending on the severity of the incident.

2.3.8   If the incident can be dealt with operationally, it will be delegated to the relevant service area. Incidents which threaten the Council's ability to deliver critical functions will be led by the DERC who will chair the relevant incident management team. Should an incident be beyond the capability of the Council or have the potential to impact people, property, environment or another partner agency, the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership (GLRP) will be activated by the DERC in response to the emergency. The "Activating the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership (GLRP) Activation Pack" provides a clear and concise procedure for activating the GLRP, including a flowchart, checklist and pro-forma GLRP agenda pack.

2.3.9   The DERC pack of procedures is further complemented by: a list of emergency rest centres and the related contact details; a procedure on reporting the location of vulnerable individuals; a DERC rota detailing DERC cover until 30 November 2020; a list of DERC Buddies, pairing DERCs for the purpose of providing support responding to incidents and rota cover; and a list of emergency contacts.

2.3.10   Whilst the Council's emergency procedures are clear and concise, the following elements had not been finalised and included at the time of the audit, though these are partially covered through the Council's involvement with the GLRP:

- how to assess the risk of emergencies occurring from time to time (requirement of the Act);
- the list of the Council's "critical functions" and how they are assessed by the DERC to determine the appropriate response to an incident;
- list of category 1 responders with lead responsibility for warning, informing and advising the public in relation to particular emergencies (as required to be identified by the Regulations 2005);
- process for releasing media statements (need to avoid alarming the public unnecessarily under the Regulations 2005);
- guidance on providing business continuity advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations (as required by Regulations 2005);
- the Council's procedure / Plan for recovery phase of incident / emergency.

Recommendation
The Council's emergency procedures and guidance, in support of the Council's Generic Emergency Plan, should be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

Service Response / Action
Agreed. The procedures have been updated to include a list of the Council's critical functions and the process for releasing media statements. The remaining updates will be completed.

Implementation Date	**Responsible Officer**	**Grading**
December 2020	Assurance Manager	Significant within audited area

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2.4   Risk Assessment

Corporate Risk Register

2.4.1   Corporate Risk Corp-004 Civil Contingencies is monitored by CMT monthly. The definition of the risk is "The Council must ensure that it puts in place adequate training, planning and testing for civil contingency events and other incidents". Corp-004 identifies a number of risk impacts which could result in the Council failing to meet its statutory obligations in relation to emergency planning and response, and business continuity; causes, such as lack of governance, training and failure to review and update plans as required; and

controls to address these causes, such as training key officers and ensuring an adequate governance structure is in place to manage risks and test resilience to emergencies.

2.4.2   Nine Corp-004 controls were reported to CMT in February 2020, four of which were described as "fully effective" as follows:

- established DERC rota to ensure a Chief Officer is always available to contribute to the Council's response to emergencies;
- management of single authority emergency planning arrangements;
- system in place for monitoring the preparedness of ALEOs to support the Council in responding to emergencies through the ALEO Assurance Hub.
- civil contingencies input to Capital Projects and planning of events.

2.4.3   The DERC rota is in place and the new activation packs and DERC buddy system have helped to support the DERCs. Arrangements are managed at a single authority level with multi-authority coordination / assistance managed through the LRP. The Resilience Hub is considered further at section 2.8.

2.4.4   The Council's Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) are: Aberdeen Heat and Power (AHP); Aberdeen Performing Arts (APA); Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV); Bon Accord Care (BAC); and Sport Aberdeen (SA). The ALEO Assurance Hub chaired by the Council's Assurance Manager has oversight of the ALEOs and is scheduled to meet twice annually. As in previous years, an ALEO Assurance Hub workplan was put in place for 2020; this covered reporting requirements for the ALEOs, including ALEO risk registers, business continuity planning and preparations around PREVENT.

2.4.5   The ALEO Assurance Hub noted in October 2019 that two of the ALEOs' business continuity plans had not been subject to review. It was subsequently reported to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in December 2019 that risks were generally 'low' or 'very low' in respect of each ALEO across a range of areas of focus.   The Hub was unable to report in May 2020 due to COVID-19, but review of business continuity remains on its workplan.

2.4.6   An assurance action in relation to civil contingency arrangements for capital projects and events planning was last reported in October 2019 at which point the action was 70% complete. It has been confirmed that the Council's Corporate Project Management Toolkit Business Case for capital projects now includes a requirement to consult with the Council's Emergency Planning and Resilience Lead, and there is increased collaboration with the Events Team.

2.4.7   Assurance actions with responsible officers were in place to monitor the five 'partially effective' controls to completion. Progress with assurance actions was being regularly reported to CMT. However, the format of the Corporate Risk Register has since changed and controls are no longer recorded as partially or fully effective.

2.4.8   The new format Council risk register was reported to ECMT on 6 August 2020. The Corporate Civil Contingencies risk (formerly Corp-004), sets out that the Council must ensure that it puts in place adequate training, planning, and testing for civil contingency events and other incidents. The assurance actions reported as 'partially effective' in February 2020 included the following, and were recorded as 70% complete as at August 2020:

- Training and development programme for Duty Emergency Response Co-ordinators (DERCs). This includes regular testing of activation packs, including LRP activation;
- Training and development programme for operational staff who are likely to have to play a key role in emergency response;

- Testing of resilience structures and emergency plans, including input to plans which are pan-Grampian and overseen by the LRP and institutional arrangements which dovetail with LRP plans and the Council's Generic Emergency Plan;
- Embed CONTEST priorities of Prepare and Prevent within the capability of ACC; and
- Review of Emergency Plans to ensure preparedness and ability of ACC as a Category 1 responder.

2.4.9   These are overseen and monitored towards completion by ECMT Stewardship, and the Governance Leadership Team, which reviews corporate risks within its portfolio once a month.

2.4.10 The ORG terms of reference include oversight of risk registers, but there is currently no comprehensive collation of civil contingency risks on which to base its review. Individual risks may be detailed in Cluster risk registers and depend on Officers escalating them as appropriate to the Corporate or Strategic level as appropriate. There is a risk that the cumulative impact of lower level risks may not be highlighted to the ORG through this route.

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Recommendation
The Service should review risk register processes to ensure the ORG has sufficient data to fulfil its remit.

Service Response / Action
Agreed. We have a Corporate level risk on Civil Contingencies, and it is being developed into a Place register and will incorporate the operational level risks which are managed locally and escalated to strategic level if they will impact on our ability to manage the corporate level risk. This will be overseen and owned by ORG. The Corporate level risk register is monitored by CMT and ECMT Stewardship. This complements scrutiny of risk to the Place at the LRP.

Implementation Date	**Responsible Officer**	**Grading**
December 2020	Assurance Manager	Significant within audited area

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GLRP Risk Register

2.4.11 The format and substance of the GLRP Risk Register was approved by the GLRP in February 2020. This is a live document and will be a standing agenda item under the GLRP's revised governance structure. The GLRP risk register is informed by the regional Community Risk Register and national risk register, covering emergency risks, including: pandemic influenza; flooding; national electricity and fuel supply disruption; radiation exposure; and terrorist threat in crowded places. The GLRP also covers identification of vulnerable people and training and exercising. For each risk the following is identified: risk owner; risk level (low, medium, high); last reviewed; controls; control gaps; and actions (to address control gaps). The Council partially meets its obligations as a Category 1 responder to assess the risk of emergencies occurring from time to time by feeding into the risks owned by the GLRP.

2.5   Emergency Plans

2.5.1   As detailed in the Council's Generic Initial Actions Activation Pack, the following Aberdeen City Council emergency plans are in place:

Aberdeen City Council Internal Plans:
- Aberdeen City Council Care for People Plan – planned review date by 31 January 2020
- Aberdeen City Council Winter Preparedness Plan – 2020/21 plan in place

2.5.2   The Council's Move to Critical UK Threat Level plan was being updated in consultation with Chief Officers at the time of the audit.

2.5.3   It was noted that the Aberdeen City Council Care for People Plan was due to be reviewed by 31 January 2020 and this was outstanding as at 11 September 2020. Governance advised the plan is fit for purpose, was activated in response to COVID-19 and will be reviewed by the Health and Social Care partnership to reflect lessons learned during the Council's response phase to COVID-19. Work has begun in this regard through the preparation of revised procedures for reception centres. A recommendation is included to track progress.

Recommendation
The Aberdeen City Council Care for People Plan should be reviewed.

Service Response / Action
Agreed. The Care For People Plan will be reviewed in light of lessons learned during the response to Covid-19 and activation cards summarising key actions to be undertaken will be added to the plan. This will be reported through the Aberdeen City Care For People Group.

Implementation Date	**Responsible Officer**	**Grading**
December 2020	H&SCP Business Manager	Important within audited area

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2.5.4   The Council's Organisational Resilience Stocktake identified opportunities to enhance the Aberdeen City plans in place, to dovetail with the plans held at GLRP level. Further development of these plans has yet to be scheduled, including:

- Coastal pollution plan
- Fuel plan
- Flooding response plan
- Scientific & Technical Advice Cell (STAC) activation and management plan
- Pipeline activation pack

Recommendation
Further development of the resilience plans detailed above should be scheduled, taking account of existing multi-agency plans.

Service Response / Action
Agreed. Further development will be considered.

Implementation Date	**Responsible Officer**	**Grading**
July 2021	Emergency Planning and Resilience Lead	Significant within audited area

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2.6   Training and Exercising of Plans

2.6.1   It is a statutory requirement under Civil Contingencies legislation for the Council to carry out exercises and training for the purposes of ensuring civil contingency arrangements are effective. Adherence to this requirement is evidenced through the Council's involvement in various exercises led by the GLRP. The Council also undertook specific and multi-

agency exercises in respect of the new P&J Live Arena and participated in a number of "no-notice" activations of the GLRP.

2.6.2   Crisis Management Founding Principles training was delivered on three separate occasions in 2019. This training is a requirement for being a member of the various Liaison and Sub-Groups detailed in paragraph 2.2.10. Sixteen Council staff have completed this training since 2016; this included six Chief Officers.

2.7   Incident De-brief Process

2.7.1   Following the Organisational Resilience Stocktake, CMT approved the following de-brief process for emergencies requiring a strategic response:

- Within 24 hours, a 'hot de-brief' will be conducted. The de-brief will be chaired by the Emergency Planning and Resilience Lead (EPRL) and attendees should be all internal members of staff involved in the response including the DERC and Recovery Manager (if appointed). The 'hot-de-brief' will be used to establish the timeline, discuss what worked, what did not work, what could have been done differently, and identify lessons to be learned. Topics should cover: communication, resources, procedures, team working, multi-agency response, roles and responsibilities and emerging issues. If the incident occurs on a weekend, the 'hot' de-brief will take place on the next working day.

- The EPRL will compile the incident and de-brief report and circulate to de-brief participants within 2 weeks.

- De-brief participants will be given 2 weeks to provide comment.

- Incident report and de-brief will then be taken to the Organisational Resilience Group for critique and recommendations will be made on actions which are to be implemented. Recent reporting to ORG is covered at paragraph 2.2.15 above.

- Once approved, the report will be finalised and issued to ECMT who will allocate the actions with timescales to the relevant officers within their clusters. Recent reporting to ECMT is covered at paragraph 2.2.15 above.

- Once the actions have been implemented, the Organisational Resilience Group will sign off the incident report along with the Recovery Manager (if appointed) including a record of all costs incurred, and a conclusion on the legal outcomes if applicable. The incident report will then become a case study which can be used for learnings for the DERC and wider Aberdeen City Council team.

- There will be an annual review of all incidents across the organisation to identify if there is a trend of patterns in relation to the types of incidents that are occurring, and to identify if these incidents are related to risks or are the result of human behaviour. This could then influence the topic of community resilience projects or risk reduction projects to reduce the type of incidents. The annual report should also include a thorough assessment of the costs and resources incurred by types of incidents and identify areas of weakness. The annual report is expected to be reported to Public Protection Committee in December 2020.

- Any use of emergency powers will be subsequently reported to Committee in accordance with the Powers Delegated to Officers.

2.8   Resilience Hub

2.8.1   As part of the Organisational Resilience Stocktake, an office 365 Teams based "Resilience Hub" was approved by CMT for inclusion in the assurance tile of the Managers Portal, available to DERCs. It is intended that this will include the following:

- DERC procedures – this will include the Generic Emergency Plans and related activation packs.

- Emergency plans – copies of all emergency plans (local, Grampian, and national).

- Incident activation capability – the hub will be used to activate the various Incident Management Teams via text message.   Live operation of the Incident Management Teams will also be possible via Microsoft Teams.

- Case Studies – details of incidents including de-brief reports, lessons learned, recommendations, actions and record of accumulated spend. This will facilitate annual review of incidents for establishing patterns / identifying relevant risks.

- GLRP documentation including multi-agency key contacts; GLRP risk register; Community Risk Register; and Grampian Community Asset Register.

- Risk Assessments – all Council hazard / site specific risk assessments and floor plans.

- Training – relevant emergency training materials for DERCs and other relevant staff. It is hoped online training will be developed and delivered through the Resilience Hub.

- Exercises – record of all the internal and multi-agency exercises including dates, locations and attendees.   De-brief reports will also be included with recommendations detailed and action taken.

- Recovery – the Generic Recovery Plan and associated documents will be held within the Recovery section of the Resilience Hub. An activation pack for generic recovery will be included detailing roles and responsibilities for an appointed Recovery Manager and Recovery Incident Management Team.   The Recovery Plan and activation pack have yet to be developed.   A recommendation has already been included at paragraph 2.3.9 above.

- Warning and informing – the Hub will hold Corporate Comms guidance, briefing templates and holding statements for DERCs and Elected Members to update the media and make press releases.

- Legislation – copies of all relevant legislation and government Civil Contingencies guidance e.g. Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Terrorism Act 2000, Preparing Scotland guidance.

- News room – updates on current resilience issues e.g. webcasts, blogs, news articles. It can also be used to raise awareness of emergency planning activity.

- Finance – the Finance section will be used to reconcile any spend incurred by DERCs in relation to emergency response e.g. via credit cards or pre-established accounts (food take away delivery or taxis). An annual review of spend during incident response is proposed to identify where spend is frequently occurred (to improve procurement arrangements).

2.8.2   The Resilience Hub has the potential to raise awareness of the Council's emergency planning, response and recovery arrangements amongst relevant staff and should facilitate the Council in achieving its statutory obligations in relation to emergencies.

AUDITORS: D Hughes
            C Harvey
            A Johnston

Appendix 1 – Grading of Recommendations

GRADE	DEFINITION
Major at a Corporate Level	The absence of, or failure to comply with, an appropriate internal control which could result in, for example, a material financial loss, or loss of reputation, to the organisation.
Major at a Service Level	The absence of, or failure to comply with, an appropriate internal control which could result in, for example, a material financial loss to the Service/area audited. Financial Regulations have been consistently breached.
Significant within audited area	Addressing this issue will enhance internal controls. An element of control is missing or only partial in nature. The existence of the weakness identified has an impact on a system's adequacy and effectiveness. Financial Regulations have been breached.
Important within audited area	Although the element of internal control is satisfactory, a control weakness was identified, the existence of the weakness, taken independently or with other findings does not impair the overall system of internal control.

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