ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Public Protection
DATE	9 May 2018
REPORT TITLE	Resilience Self-Assessment
REPORT NUMBER	GOV/18/016
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1, 2.5

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides detail of a self-assessment process carried out during 2017 that was designed to give the organisation an understanding of its resilience preparedness.

2.   RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

2.1   Notes the content of this report

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   Rationale for Carrying out Self- Assessment

3.1.1 Aberdeen City Council (ACC) is committed to being fully prepared to respond effectively to, and recover quickly from, major incidents, crises or events.

3.1.2 As a Category 1 responder, as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, ACC require to –

- Identify and assess risk
- Maintain emergency plans
- Maintain business continuity plans
- Promote business continuity more widely
- Communicate effectively with the public in an emergency
- Share information with partner agencies and fellow responders
- Co-operate effectively with others in delivery of the above duties

3.1.3 In a Scottish context, successful delivery of the duties imposed by the Civil

Contingencies Act 2004 is configured around the concept of Integrated Emergency Management, underpinned by the following five key activities which are consolidated in the Preparing Scotland suite of guidance –

- Assessment of Threats and Risks
- Prevention of adverse incidents
- Preparation of measures to deal with any incidents or events which occur
- Response – the ability to respond effectively to incidents
- Recovery – the capacity to return to normality as quickly as possible.

3.1.4 A successful approach to these matters will result in ACC becoming an increasingly resilient organisation.

3.1.5 Resilience can be defined as the capacity and capability to anticipate, prepare for, respond and adapt to incremental change and sudden disruptions in order to survive as an organisation and continue to serve the communities of Aberdeen during, and in the aftermath of, an emergency or major incident.

3.1.6 The purpose of the assessment process was to benchmark current levels of capacity and capability in relation to emergency preparedness and response across Aberdeen City Council. The current process has identified elements of good practice, as well as areas where improvements could be made.

3.2 Development of Assessment Process

3.2.1 Following the severe flooding that affected Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire during Christmas and New Year 2015/2016, the Chief Executive decided to seek an appropriate means to assess Aberdeen City council's readiness to plan and respond appropriately to significant incidents. It became clear that no standards existed to make this assessment. In September 2016 the Chief Executive commissioned an ex Police Superintendent with extensive experience in resilience planning for Police Scotland, to develop and deliver a self-assessment process for ACC that would allow an understanding of organisational resilience and preparedness for civil contingencies events.

3.2.2 In developing the assessment process, a series of standards were developed, aligned to the five headline assessment criteria defined within the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) self assessment model, namely –

- Leadership and Culture
- Strategy and Governance
- Partnership and Resources
- People, Development and Involvement
- Plans, Procedures and Services

3.2.3 The standards were developed following a review of available literature and existing doctrine. The primary sources of reference in terms of configuring the format, content and style of these standards are –

- Preparing Scotland Guidance on Resilience
- Audit Scotland –Improving Civil Contingencies Planning - 2009
- British Standard - Guidance for Organisational Resilience BS6500:2014
- British Standard for Crisis Management BS11200:2014
- British Standard for Business Continuity ISO 22301:2014

3.2.4 In recognition of the view that the pursuit of organisational resilience is a continuous and ongoing process, assessment criteria for levels of capacity and capability have been developed under the headings of **Developing, Achieving** and **Optimising**.

3.2.5 Outline assessment criteria was developed for each question to aid the assessment process, as well as further generic guidance to support the assessment process. This supported assessment of the completed questionnaires, management of workshop sessions and facilitated benchmarking and quality assurance.

3.2.6 The selection of this assessment criteria ensures ongoing focus, avoiding the risk of a potential reduction in energy in a particular area once an outcome is regarded as being achieved. It also allows emerging risks, in areas where acceptable levels of capacity and capability have previously regarded as having been achieved, to be more readily identified.

3.3   The Assessment Process

3.3.1 The development and delivery of this self assessment process for resilience has been mandated by the Chief Executive of Aberdeen City Council.

3.3.2 Ownership of the self assessment process at strategic level lay with the Head of Communities and Housing, who also chaired the Organisational Resilience Group, ensuring that the findings of this process are quality assured and reported to the Corporate Management Team. This is part of a wider suite of resilience matters including the Duty Emergency Response Co-ordinator, and participation in the Local and Regional Resilience Partnerships.

3.3.3 In planning the self assessment exercise, it was decided that in order to gain the best picture of current capacity, and to prevent the assessment process becoming unduly burdensome across the organisation that the assessment would focus on those with management responsibility, and with an anticipated awareness of resilience matters.

3.3.4 The rationale behind such an approach was that those with supervisory responsibility may be expected to have an appreciation of the current position within their own service area, as well as also possessing broader organisational perspective.

3.3.5 To that end, the third tier management network was selected for completion of the questionnaires, with workshop sessions established for the members of the Organisational Resilience Group, and for Business Continuity plan holders from across the organisation. This satisfied the selection criteria and ensured participation from a representative cross section from across the Council.

3.3.6 A number of themes (see 3.4) were identified from the self assessment process, the majority of which were triangulated through the workshop sessions that took place with managers. This provides confidence that these themes have sufficient validity to be taken forward through the action plan managed by the Organisational Resilience Group

3.3.7 The report was delivered in May 2017. In recognition that there was no existing precedent for resilience self-assessment in Scotland, the draft standards and assessment criteria were reviewed, at the request of the Chief Executive, by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS) and an English Local Authority that agreed to pilot the assessment and provide feedback. Positive   feedback was received from both parties and the self-assessment report was introduced onto the agenda of the Organisational Resilience Group in December 2017. A final report and suggested action plan were submitted. A summarised assessment of the standards along with the action plan accompany this report. Some of the actions have also been identified and progressed through an internal audit report on Business Continuity.

3.4 **Themes and Findings**

3.4.1 The key themes arising from this process are as follows –

- Aberdeen City Council has a strong track record in responding effectively to major incidents and emergency situations, and of strong levels of collaboration with partner agencies.

- Managers are largely confident of their ability to respond to major events and emergencies. This confidence is strong in relation to activity related to their core role but appears to reduce if applied to leadership across service areas.

- There would be benefit in promoting awareness of roles and responsibilities in relation to emergency response situations to managers across the organisation.

- Although there is high level of understanding amongst managers as to the importance of emergency planning and business continuity, this does not always translate into a commensurate level of activity. This is attributed to the high level of competing demand on individuals and teams in relation to other matters.

- The level of importance attached to emergency preparedness and business continuity should be clearly stated in strategic documents and articulated by senior management.

- Training opportunities are extremely limited, with participation being voluntary and as such attended by those with an interest in the subject.

- This also applies to testing and exercising plans which is infrequent and comparatively unstructured. This reflects the situation in many other organisations where budgetary and operational pressures mitigate against activity of this type.

3.5   Duty Emergency Response Coordinator (DERC)

3.5.1   A key strength in the current emergency response arrangements is the role of DERC. Each Director and Chief Officer (other than Chief Social Work (CSWO) Officer who participates in a CSWO rota) are required to participate in a formal duty rota.

3.5.2   The role of the DERC is to coordinate any incident or emergency on behalf of the Chief Executive. They will generally be activated by the emergency Planning Team and will be required to coordinating the responses of all council services involved in the response. They will also be required to liaise with other responding organisations usually through the Local Resilience Partnership arrangements.

3.5.3   The value of the DERC has been realised on two notable occasions, namely the response to the evacuations at Froghall Gardens and, more recently, the fire leading to power loss at Cairncry Court.

3.5.4   A "Move to Critical" plan has also been produced in light of the ongoing threat of terrorism to this country. This ensured that the DERC and other key staff were aware of implications of, and actions required, when the UK threat level was raised to Critical after the Manchester Arena bombing.

3.5.5   The Organisational Resilience Group maintains an action plan based on recommendations arising from incidents and exercises. It also maintains an overview of of the Council's CONTEST and PREVENT (Govt Counter Terrorism Strategy) activity.

3.5.6   It is worth noting that a tabletop exercise was delivered by the Emergency Planning Team in January 2018 that involved DERCs, other key staff, emergency services and other partner organisations. The exercise scenario involved a fire in a multi storey block off Cairncry Road. In February, the

DERC was called to manage an incident almost identical to the exercise scenario in a neighbouring block.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5.2   The report does however demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to its duties under the CCA and appreciation of the role it plays in community safety and resilience.

6.   MANAGEMENT OF RISK

6.1   All identified actions through this work are allocated and tracked. Risk in this area relates to the non-completion of identified actions within the allocated timescale. These actions are managed through the organisaitonal resilience group, and where appropriate through CMT as part of the critical incident plan.

6.2   Failure to undertake this assessment would have exposed the Council to unacceptable risk in relation to reputation; finance and legislative. This assessment and report should therefore be seen as part of the risk management of this area of work.

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	None for this report		
Legal	Failure of the council to have oversight of Services delivering Public Protection could result in the council failing to meet its statutory duties in terms of services aimed at protecting the public, and potential litigation from people who have been harmed	M	Agreement by this committee on the matters to be reported will allow oversight of these services with a view to minimising the risk of failing to protect the public.

Employee	None for this report		
Customer	Failure of the council to have oversight of Services delivering Public Protection could result in the public being at risk of harm and loss of customer confidence	M	Agreement by this committee on the matters to be reported will allow oversight of these services with a view to minimising the risk of failing to protect the public, and ensure compliance with any legal requirements or national standards and guidance for those services
Environment	None for this report		
Technology	None for this report		
Reputational	Failure of the council to have oversight of Services delivering Public Protection could result in organisational failings being missed and damage the reputation of the council	M	Agreement by this committee on the matters to be reported will allow oversight of these services with a view to ensuring compliance with any legal requirements or national standards and guidance for those services

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	In addition to securing protection of the public, business compliance with legislation reduces the risk to them of criminal proceedings and/or litigation, and so is good for them individually and for the economy as a whole.
Prosperous People	People who are adequately protected from threats to their health, safety and economic wellbeing are more likely to prosper than those who are not.
Prosperous Place	Safe and Resilient Communities We will maintain resilient and effective Category 1 and Category 2 Responders (as defined by Civil Contingencies Act 2004)
Enabling Technology	No

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	
Organisational Design	DERC role incorporated into Chief Officer roles and responsibilities
Governance	Appropriate oversight of services delivering public protection provides assurance to both the organisation and the public in terms of meeting the council's statutory duties, and also contributes to compliance with agreed standards.
Workforce	Training requirement for DERCs and other staff bearing in mind changes in service delivery and areas of responsibility.
Process Design	
Technology	
Partnerships and Alliances	Effective working through the Local Resilience Partnership and other forums.

8.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Protection of equality and human rights is integral to the work of these services, and for this reason a full EHRIA is not required.
Privacy Impact Assessment	not required
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	not applicable

9.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10.   APPENDICES

1.   Summary of Assessment Standards
2.   Action Log Framework Standards

11.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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