

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	17 th January 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Resilience Annual Report
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/013
CHIEF OFFICER	Jenni Lawson, Interim Chief Officer – Governance
REPORT AUTHOR	Fiona Mann
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.12

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the annual assurance report on the Council's resilience arrangements in fulfilment of its duties as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee -

- 2.1 notes the progress made in further embedding the Council's resilience arrangements during another challenging year for emergency response; and
- 2.2 notes the updated Generic Emergency Plan which has received minor alterations under the relevant delegated powers.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has emergency planning responsibilities to fulfil as a Category 1 responder, as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Committee has oversight of the following areas, carried over from the previous Public Protection Committee:

- Our compliance with the Council’s duties relating to resilience and local emergencies, including staffing arrangements and systems for incident management;
 - Recommendations in response to local, regional and national lessons learnt reports in respect of emergency planning matters and monitoring their implementation; and
 - Our response to the National CONTEST strategy and associated plans relating to Counter Terrorism.
- 3.2 Officers last reported to the Public Protection Committee on 7th December 2021, summarising all resilience activity in the 12 months’ prior. The period since then has focused largely on our response to and recovery from the Storms of late 2021 and early 2022 - Arwen, Corrie and Malik - whilst continuing to navigate the ongoing recovery from the pandemic and preparing for new, emerging and concurrent risks. This report provides the annual position statement on the Council’s response activity and preparedness, including details of further planned improvements to ensure that the Council is in as strong a position as possible to respond to emergencies and incidents affecting the public.
- 3.3 Minor alterations have been made to the Council’s Generic Emergency Plan, the plan which is activated upon an emergency as defined by the Act. A copy is appended for reference purposes.

CATEGORY 1 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.4 Local authorities have a number of specific duties under the 2004 Act, including supporting the emergency services during a response, and these are listed in full in our General Emergency Plan. Our responsibilities are as follows:
- To **assess the risk of emergencies occurring** and use this to inform contingency planning;
 - To maintain **emergency plans** and **business continuity plans**;
 - To **inform the public** about civil protection matters and to maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency;
 - To share information with other **local responders** to enhance coordination, and to co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency; and
 - To promote business continuity by providing advice and assistance to **businesses and voluntary organisations**

Assessment of Risks

- 3.5 The Risk Board retained oversight of our preparedness and response to incidents and emergencies, including assessment of risk and management of mitigations. This provides an escalation route to the Corporate Management Team (CMT). The City Resilience Group (CRG) has a role to identify a) risks which could cause an emergency in the city which threatens the safety of our residents and b) risks which could hamper an emergency response in the city. Collectively, these risks form a Place Risk Register, which allows the CRG to

assess, monitor and manage the risk of emergencies occurring which would impact upon the place of Aberdeen.



- 3.6 The Council continues to monitor and manage concurrent risks around COVID-19 and EU Exit. These risks are now embedded in the Corporate, Cluster and Operational risk registers as “business as usual” risk management activity. Corporate risks are monitored by the Risk Board and the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee, whilst Chief Officers monitor Cluster and Operational risks regularly, including horizon scanning for new or escalated risks.
- 3.7 Resilience structures were activated to assess and manage the risk associated with the resettlement of asylum families and those displaced by conflict and war. This involved place based risks being assessed and mitigated in collaboration with public sector partners, and Scottish and UK Governments. An incident management approach was followed in initially responding and planning to these developments to ensure a partnership response was in place. This response is now managed through the Refugee and Asylum Working Group
- 3.8 Similarly, resilience structures were activated to plan and prepare for the impacts of industrial action in the waste sector and in schools. The use of our Incident Management Team processes, set out in the Generic Emergency Plan, helped to ensure that multi agency partners were working alongside officers and that everyone was fully sighted on the planning arrangement and mitigations of the Council and providing support around the potential consequences.
- 3.9 Key members of the CRG have met regularly during numerous debriefs, both internal and multi-agency. The following priority actions have been identified by the CRG based on an assessment of risk to the city. These have been progressed throughout the year and further detail is included later in this report:
- Creation of a City Persons at Risk Database (PARD)
 - Volunteers, Community, Business and Individual Resilience
 - Power Resilience
- 3.10 All emergencies and incidents that required oversight from CRG this year have held the same themes by way of actions/ learnings and priorities, there are clear actions that have been tasked and are on track. It should be noted that the need

to increase the volunteer pool of council staff to support emergency response IMTs is set to continue as a priority as this is con

- 3.11 The Council's corporate risk register, monitored by the Risk Board, ensures that the risk of compliance with our civil contingencies responsibilities is effectively managed. This was reported to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in February 2022 along with the relevant assurance map. This provided assurance that the required controls are in place and will complement the scrutiny of risks at the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership (GLRP) Working Group. The next report is due in March 2023.
- 3.12 The Emergency Response Team structure is now very well embedded and the three-tier approach of Strategic (Duty Emergency Response Coordinator – DERC)), Tactical (Tactical Lead) and Operational has continued to prove effective throughout the year in enabling us to discharge our role as a Category 1 responder, in tandem with utilising the Generic Emergency Plan.
- 3.13 In 2022 we have seen a number of existing officers take up roles in the emergency response wider team. A new DERC and two interim DERCs have received training and added to the DERC rota. An Emergency Planning Resilience and Civic Officer started with the Council in August, adding much needed resilience. There has been some movement of staff in the Tactical Lead role with two new officers being trained currently. Other than the one new post we continue to utilise existing resource and expertise thus spreading our resilience and capability across a wide group of officers. All of the above builds on our capacity and makes us more resilient as an organisation however due to the increase in incidents, climate-related and otherwise, we do need to be mindful of the resource required to maintain business as usual balanced against the number of unpredictable emergencies / responses.
- 3.14 The Council has responded to a number of concurrent incidents / events and effectively managed these through the Council's emergency response structures, including subsequent de-briefs. Improvement actions are identified and overseen by the CRG.

Incident / Event	Activity
Storms Malik and Corrie	Incident Management Team (IMT) Debriefs Grampian Local Resilience Partnership (GLRP)
Operation Unicorn – September	Activated the Unicorn DERCs and IMT GLRP Debriefs
Climate Camp – July	Reviewed risks – unauthorised encampment on city council land and protest at council premises or on road network IMT Police Scotland Silver meetings Protest management plan activated Debrief

Waste Strike	IMT Debriefs GLRP
Weather event – flooding (Nov)	IMT Debriefs GLRP

A summary of the incidents that have resulted in improvements being identified is below:

Incident	Improvements identified	Status
Climate Camp July	Protest Management Plan for Council owned and managed venues	Completed and issued
Storms	NHSG Mutual Aid Request – template and procedure required	Completed. Created by ACC EPR&C and adopted by GLRP in early 2022
Weather event November	Rota creation to manage rest centre managers in tandem with reward scheme to encourage membership. Increase ACC staff volunteers pool to support emergency response incidents. Harness the volunteer pool from operation Unicorn.	Priority actions for 2023 Q1

3.15 Exercising and training continues to be a priority for the organisation, with full support from ECMT which is critical in ensuring engagement from all relevant teams. The following have been completed this year:

- DERC “Page One” training – December 2022
- Unannounced activation of GLRP – November 2022 (multi agency)
- DERC induction training – February and November 2022
- Elected Member training on Category one responsibilities and Civil Contingencies duties – Summer 2022
- Exercise Duthie – June 2022 (multi agency)
- Emergency Planning wrote, presented and facilitated the winter preparedness / training and presentation across GLRP partners – November 2022
- DERC and SMOC refresher presentation – December 2022
- Power Resilience x 2 sessions – scenario planning for planned power cuts (Rota Load Disconnections and Demand Control - OC6) November & December 2022

- ACC Emergency Response Teams and ALEOs, Winter preparedness exercise December 2022

3.16 Training and development will continue throughout 2023 to ensure that the Council's emergency response teams, ALEOs and community groups are clear on their roles and how to execute these in the event of risks manifesting, individually or concurrently. This is done through a combination of

1. **Page turn** exercises on emergency plans and business continuity plans;
2. **Presentations**/discussions to check assumptions and shared understanding e.g. winter preparedness;
3. **Table top** exercises which facilitate role play including concurrency of factors as part of a single emergency as well as concurrent incidents e.g. mass evacuation;
4. **Live play** exercises which are as close as safely possible to an actual incident e.g. power resilience failure; and
5. **Drills** which are coordinated and supervised closely and test existing protocols and plans.

3.17 The continued use of the internal Resilience Hub, a SharePoint site which provides a toolkit for the Council's emergency response teams, has continued with a strong focus over the year and its content is steadily growing. This assists with situational awareness, sharing of historical data and lessons learned, partnership contacts, relevant legislation and regulation reference documents. The Resilience Hub is also a central place to share information and updates on incidents and acts as the single point of contact for current information e.g. emergency plans and activation packs.

- Monthly updates posted UK PROTECT Bulletin
- Links to reports such as Coronavirus lessons learned to date UK Parliament
- Sharing of partner rotas
- Weather updates, official warnings as well operational updates
- DERC and SMOC channel to allow immediate information flow between our NHS colleagues senior manager on call and our DERC
- Templates for managing incidents and debriefs from incidents
- Media reports of interest
- Changes in legislation or guidance
- Outcome report such as Manchester Arena incident
- Training opportunities from other partners

3.18 Risks are also assessed and monitored regularly through the GLRP which manages a risk register and resulting workplan. The Emergency Planning, Resilience and Civic (EPRC team) represents the Council on the GLRP Working Group which meets every six weeks. The EPRC works closely with Chief Officers to help manage their contribution to emergency response.

3.19 The community safety partnership undertakes the multi-agency Operation Fawkes each year in the lead up to and including Bonfire Night. This involves key local partners such as SFRS, Police Scotland and Aberdeen City Council. The Operation aims to tackle unauthorised bonfires, fireworks, fire

hazards and the accumulation of waste or hazardous materials that represent potential fire risks.

- 3.20 **Arm's Length External Organisations** (ALEOs) support the Council to carry out our Category 1 responder duties in a number of ways, for example use of premises, staff and equipment as a rest centre in an emergency. ALEOs emergency powers, public liability insurance and business continuity plans are reviewed annually by the ALEO Assurance Hub. These relationships allow additional resilience for the emergency response plans. Workshops have taken place with each of the five ALEOs in 2022, and this will build upon their understanding of the Council's civil contingencies responsibilities and how they can support us in meeting these, as well as their role in supporting the Prevent and Protect strand of the CONTEST strategy (managing the risk of radicalisation in Aberdeen).

Emergency and Business Continuity Plans

- 3.21 The **Generic Emergency Plan** (GEP), has had its annual review and been updated with minimal amendments and signed off by the Interim Chief Officer of Governance under delegated powers.
- 3.22 Integrated Joint Boards (IJB) became Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act in April 2021. The Council and the ACHSCP had been working very closely on civil contingency matters, and the Chief Officer of the ACHSCP (and staff) had been involved in meetings of the GLRP and had also participated in the response to a number of incidents in the past year. The role of the IJB as a category one responder is still evolving and work will continue in the coming year to develop and train their key response teams via the ACC EPRC team and review the activation process and overall understanding of their role within the GLRP. The **Care for People Plan** was reviewed and updated then approved by the Care for People Group in October 2022. In terms of governance, representatives from the Partnership are members of various Council groups and boards which helps to further enhance the working arrangements.
- 3.23 Preparation continues for the Council's **Power Resilience Plan** for a National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) failure (previously known as 'Blackstart) is an *unplanned* prolonged power outage affecting the whole of the UK, or the whole of Scotland. This is a significant piece of work being progressed through a GLRP Task and Finish Group, a separate Resilient Telecommunications Group, and internally at the Council, through the further development of a draft of the of the Power Resilience Plan referred to above which will be circulated for consultation within the organisation early in 2023.
- 3.24 In tandem with planning for NETS Failure, a separate workstream and scenario planning exercise has taken place for *planned* power outages which have emerged as a low likelihood risk for winter 2022/2023. Known as Rota Load Disconnections (RLD) and Demand Control-OC6, these planned power outages may have short term 3-hour impacts in predefined small geographic areas aligned with postcodes (i.e., AB11) again spread across all of the UK at the same time. The scenario planning has allowed Business

Continuity Plans to be reviewed and adapted, risks identified and mitigated for and for some risks to be tolerated.

3.25 A UK government led, and Scottish Government supported, national power resilience exercise involving all local authorities and other partners, is scheduled to take place in Spring 2023 which is anticipated will significantly inform the planning for both NETS Failure and RLD and Demand Control-OC6.

3.26 The Council's **Regional Communications Centre (RCC)** is critical to the smooth working of the DERCs and wider emergency response team. A number of actions have been taken to ensure that this resource is fully aligned to emergency response teams, including:

- Creation of generic numbers for all emergency teams thus reducing risk of wrong person being called or time delay in response. Facilities, Resettlement, Housing, Communications, DERC, Tactical lead and Flooding all have 24 hour emergency on-call rotas in place.
- Business Continuity Plan exercise with RCC to ensure clarity on disaster recovery arrangements is on-going into 2023 already taking account of RLD & OC6 power resilience issues and strike action impact.
- Regular catch ups with EPRCL and RCC managers / supervisors RCC and invitation to incident debriefs where the RCC has taken the call and passed to DERC or if the RCC has been the team in an incident.

3.27 The Council has in place a schedule of other emergency plans which are developed and reviewed in conjunction with partners on the GLRP and with peer review from colleagues in other local authorities. These include:

Plan	Status	Notes
Fuel Plan (GLRP Plan)	Due for review by Police Scotland as plan owner	Expected Q1 of 2023
Care for People Plan	Reviewed, substantially amended with learnings from winter storms 2021/22 incorporated and reissued October 2022	Next review due October 2023
Cyber	On-going for 2023 Q3	Robust BCPs are in place
Plans covering other events and ceremonial occasions	Awaiting Earl Marshal and UK Government guidance.	
City Centre Lock Down plan (CONTEST)	Intention had been to complete Q3 2022 due to resource and workload in 2022.	Scheduled Q3 of 2023
Move to Critical Plan (to be activated when UK moves to highest level of terror threat)	Currently in draft.	Scheduled Q3 of 2023

Plan	Status	Notes
Coastal Pollution Plan (Oil)	By way of assurance there is an LRP plan 2019 Jan – 2024 that would be activated.	Other mitigation in place Briggs marine retainer through Operations and Protective Services
Pipeline Activation Pack	This is not a priority plan as there is an overarching Forties pipeline GLRP plan. Sections of AWPR and Dyce roads have small section of pipeline running beneath – arrangements to be reviewed.	Scheduled Q3 of 2023
Scientific and Technical Advice Cell (STAC) activation and management plan	There is a GLRP plan and activation process, has been well exercised successfully during Covid – 19	It has been reviewed in 2022 and agreed that the City does not require a standalone STAC plan – this would be part of the GLRP response to an emergency.
National Electricity transmission system (NETS)	Currently in draft.	Draft plan is due out for consultation in January 2023. RLD and OC6 planning November 2022 this is assisting the thinking for NETS.
RLD and OC6 Planned power outages	Activation pack in draft.	Presentation sessions / scenario planning exercises and documentation shared with ACC emergency response teams and ALEOs
Managing Recovery phase of incident plan	Reviewed and complete December 2022	Added to DERC activation pack and shared with SMOCs

Warning and Informing the Public

- 3.28 The Council's External Communications team operates a 24/7/365 on-call rota as part of which they will inform the public and media of an emergency situation. There is an agreed Emergency Incident Response Protocol which sets out a clear pathway for how the public are informed.

Our External Communications team are members of the GLRP Public Communications Group – this group plays a crucial role in coordinating of public communications.

- 3.29 2022 has seen the continued and successful use of easy-to-understand infographics and accompanying social media posts for on-going resilience incidents such as winter weather and flooding.

These include warnings to the public before such an event happens, what the Council is doing during these incidents including working with internal and external partners, and the recovery stages of an incident or an emergency.

- 3.30 A Winter Resilience 2022/23 campaign was launched in December, including pdf flyers, printed leaflets and social media campaign as well as a web presence on ACC site.

Working with Local Responders

- 3.31 The Council has continued to work closely with all local responders during the year, particularly to manage the response to Storms Arwen, Malik and Corrie, and in order to support our resettled communities. ACC set up a working group to manage the pressures, risks and mitigations in attendance where Police Scotland, SFRS and British Red Cross as well as a number of other third sector partners as and when required.

- 3.32 Key learnings from storm debriefs included:

- Building and promotion of Community Resilience for all
- All responders to consider their own Business Continuity Plans
- Ongoing discussions with power companies to map out the LA areas to improve situational awareness in future incidents
- SSEN to share learning from England and Wales with the group on data sharing/mapping

- 3.33 A number of multi-agency resilience workshops have taken place, with attendance by our key emergency planning and response staff. Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership participate in these sessions also. There is great value in this partnership particularly with Public Health being under ongoing and considerable pressure. 2023 will see a significant review of AHSCP emergency response plans and their resource to ensure the effectiveness of their emergency response while their new category one responder continues to mature. The effectiveness and suitability of the Senior Manager on call resource, is being reviewed to ensure alignment with the councils procedures and the DERCS role. This provides real assurance that in the North East we have strong communication links with our partners and common language and understanding in the response to an emergency.

Supporting Business and Voluntary Organisations

- 3.34 The Council's Event Guidance platform includes guidance for business and voluntary event organisers around event planning, risk assessments, adverse weather, budgeting and contingency planning – www.aberdeency.gov.uk/eventguide

- 3.35 A **Community Resilience Working Group** has been established since 2021 and led by EPR&CL to help discharge our duty to provide advice and assistance to the public in connection with the making of arrangements and integrating arrangements into the LA emergency planning process for the City.

Promoting and supporting community, business and individual resilience has been a priority activity for Aberdeen City Council through 2022 and will continue to be. The Community Resilience project is raising awareness, identifying and developing community champions and supporting the development of resilience plans across Aberdeen.

3.36 **Key activities of the project:**

1. **Emergency grab boxes** Free (funding secured) delivered to over 50 locations across the City in December.
 - Community centre
 - Learning Centre
 - AHSCP venues
 - Community Resilience Volunteer Groups
2. **New Community Resilience Volunteer Group** established and launched Bridge of Don and Danestone December 2022.
3. **Media campaign** launched December 2022 – Press releases, social media and printed material as well as web presence on ACC site.
4. **Potential to secure £125k grant from SSEN** for use in the City during 2023.
5. **Presentations** given to many outside organisations on the benefits of Community Resilience Volunteer Groups throughout 2022 and explaining what ACC can do to support the initiative.
 - Sustainable Cities working Group
 - Community Councils
 - Community Empowerment Network

- 3.37 **Business Resilience** promotion, advice and guidance is part of the council's duties under the Civil Contingencies Act.

ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES

Persons at Risk Database (PARD)

- 3.38 Considerable efforts continue to be directed at the development of our **Persons at Risk Database (PARD)**. This will allow responders to easily and accurately access and assess the vulnerability of persons affected by an emergency. Officers are working on an Aberdeen City PARD and as part of the GLRP working group activities in 2022. PARD has been discussed for many years but post learnings from the Storms of late 2021 / early 2022 it has been

identified as a priority by all three local authorities. An interim PARD is now in place, with a view to a more complete PARD by winter 2023.

CONTEST

- 3.39 The UK national strategy which aims to reduce the risk of terrorism through “the four Ps” –
- **Prevent:** stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
 - **Protect:** improve our protective security to stop a terrorist attack.
 - **Prepare:** work to minimise the impact of an attack and to recover as quickly as possible
 - **Pursue:** investigate and disrupt terrorist attacks.
- 3.40 As a Category 1 responder, the Council has a role to play in delivering on each strands and this is shared across multiple services and led by the Chief Officer – Governance as lead point of contact. Council officers participate in monthly “Bridge” calls which are chaired by Police Scotland Counter Terrorism Unit and have added some of our ALEOs and owned and managed venues to this meeting. This provides an overview of the current threat level and also any intelligence locally. It allows shared situational awareness across the North East of Scotland.
- 3.41 **Prevent** – during 2023 there is due to be an audit of this area of CONTEST.
- 3.42 **Protect** - In recent years there has been an increase in the number of terrorist attacks that have taken place in crowded public spaces. Many attacks are now targeting unprotected public spaces to avoid security measures, whilst inflicting as much damage as possible. As the threat is constantly evolving and adapting to current security measures, the Protect duty legislation is being introduced to help improve security measures against these sorts of attacks. This impacts on the council as venue owners, operators, and event organisers. A duty is proposed to be placed on local authorities (estimated in 2024) to manage this risk including implementation of physical mitigations, additional training and security such as wider CCTV and more security personnel.

Awards and Achievements

- 3.43 **Star Awards – in 2022** the Emergency Response team for Storm Arwen won the collaboration award at the Council’s Star Awards. This was a fantastic team effort and shows the commitment and loyalty that the officers have in ensuring the city responds in the most effective and efficient way to emergencies. It also proved that the structures, preparation and planning we have in place works and can be scaled up and down accordingly.

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. The establishment of response structures in accordance with the Generic Emergency Plan has helped to ensure compliance with legislation and guidance.

5.2 As the UK Government and Scottish Government COVID Inquiries progress over the course of the coming year, officers will engage fully with the process and update the committee as and when required.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

7.1 The Council's resilience arrangements rely on a constant cycle of risk management, and this is reflected in the Generic Emergency Plan and its supplementary procedures.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	None		L	Yes
Compliance	Compliance with statutory guidance and legislation is necessary to ensure the Council is not exposed to legal challenge.	Corporate level risk register in place with control actions to ensure compliance with our legal responsibilities. The continued use of the Generic Emergency Plan and strategic tactical and operational structure supports the Council to meet its civil contingencies duties and to identify and	L	Yes

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <i>*taking into account controls/control actions</i>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
		respond to concurrent risks.		
Operational	Operational services are not adequately resourced to respond to emergencies.	Tactical Lead and DERC rotas in place. Incident Management Team supporting operational teams.	L	Yes
Financial	None		L	Yes
Reputational	Risk of negative publicity in media/social media around the Council's response to emergencies.	Legal duty to warn and inform the public and businesses. Comms plan in place during incidents to ensure appropriate sharing of information.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	Risk to the city's external spaces.	Managed through the Place Risk Register overseen by the City Resilience Group. Reviewed by the working groups (IMT) from each incident via the debrief process.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

8.1 The proposals in the report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
-------------------	----------------

Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Full EHRIA not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Not applicable

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Generic Emergency Plan

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name: Fiona Mann
Title: Emergency Planning, Resilience and Civic Lead
Email Address : fionann@aberdeencity.gov.uk