

## For publication

### Emergency planning and Business Continuity Annual update report

<b>Meeting:</b>	Scrutiny Select Committee – Resilient Council
<b>Date:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
<b>Cabinet portfolio:</b>	Governance
<b>Directorate:</b>	Digital Human Resources and Customer Services
<b>For publication</b>	

#### 1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To provide an annual report on Emergency planning and Business Continuity activities covering 2023/24 and to outline the planned activities for 2024/25.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

#### 3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 The report keeps members of Scrutiny up to date with the emergency planning and business continuity activities completed during 2023/24 and allows oversight of the continuous improvement activities which are planned for 2024/25.

#### 4.0 Background

- 4.1 The Council has a legal duty to have emergency and business continuity plans in place. These plans are periodically updated.
- 4.2 The Council has an emergency structure and preparedness plans in place that are initiated in the event of an emergency or business continuity event. The levels of resource allocated to these plans are commensurate to the size and scale of the emergency.
- 4.3 The key legislation that covers this subject is the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Act became law after a number of high-profile emergency events and terrorist attacks had taken place. Of note was the Manchester bombing in 1996, the foot and mouth disease outbreak in 2001, along with events such as major flooding emergencies. A significant factor would also have been

world events like the 11th September 2001 terrorist attack. The Act deals with emergency preparedness and has established a clear set of roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at the local level.

- 4.4 The Act outlines the statutory duties that responders must comply with. The Council is a category 1 responder and has a legal obligation to undertake:
  - i. Risk assessment
  - ii. Emergency planning
  - iii. Warning and informing the public
  - iv. Co-operating with partner agencies
  - v. Sharing information with partner agencies
  - vi. Business continuity
  - vii. Business continuity promotion
  
- 4.5 To enable the Council to meet its statutory duties, the Council has a contract in place with Derbyshire County Council's (DCC) emergency planning team, in the form of a service level agreement (SLA). This contracted resource and partnership ensures the Council is able to meet its statutory obligations and works to continually improve the emergency and business continuity arrangements which are in place. The SLA has been in place since 2005.
  
- 4.6 The Council benefits from joint working in this area, gaining access to a larger, very skilled Emergency Planning team, together with the provision of a dedicated Emergency Planning resource seven days a week, with a physical presence in the Town Hall for three days every two weeks.
  
- 4.7 The Council's Strategic Health, Safety and Risk Manager (SHSRM) will take on an emergency planning liaison role, supported by the Service Director – Digital, Human Resources and Customer Services. These officers work alongside the DCC's Emergency Planning team as well as the Council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) in response to an emergency or business continuity event.
  
- 4.8 As part of our SLA, senior officers receive regular emergency planning and business continuity training, including training on Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) principles which are used when responding to major multi-agency incidents.
  
- 4.9 The Council has a set of detailed emergency and business continuity plans, which are regularly updated. Access to the plan can be obtained remotely by authorised officers through Resilience Direct, a UK Government secure cloud based online platform. Resilience Direct enables agencies and other organisations to work together across geographical and organisational boundaries – during the preparation, response, and recovery phases of an emergency. This online system is compliant with all data protection requirements.

#### Summarised key activities completed during 2023/24

- 4.10 The emergency planning officer and the Strategic Health, Safety and Risk Manager have continued to work closely with the other internal and external stakeholders to review and improve internal emergency planning and business continuity arrangements. The workstreams that have been undertaken are:
- 4.11 Emergency plan review activity 2023/24
- Two reviews of the Council's Emergency Plan were completed in April and July 2023.
  - The Universal Contact List, which is the Council's emergency contact list has had three formal updates, in April, July and September 2023.
  - A four-yearly review of the Elected Members Plan and leaflet were completed in June and July 2023 respectively, post-election day.
  - The Council's winter plans and protocols were comprehensively reviewed during the winter period.
  - The emergency planning officer continued to administer the Chesterfield Snow Warden Scheme.
  - The Council's flood plan was reviewed (pre-Storm Babet) in October 2023.
  - The Council's emergency planning website pages continued to be periodically updated. Of note, is the Derbyshire Prepared Website, which is an excellent resource.
  - The Council undertook communications work to improve the awareness of the priority services registers for utility companies. Awareness information was added to the Council's website, and also an article was placed in the Your Chesterfield magazine (summer 2023 edition) on page 31 of 32 'Register for extra support' .
  - The community risk register remains live and available for the public to view.
- 4.12 The Strategic Health Safety and Risk Manager provided training to members about emergency planning and business continuity topics at the member induction sessions held post the May '23 elections. Four sessions were delivered in total.
- 4.13 Emergency planning and business continuity risks are noted within the Council's strategic risk register, which is monitored by the SHSRM as the lead professional officer for these functions. These risks were updated periodically throughout the year and changes were reported through to the corporate risk management group.
- 4.14 The SHSRM has continued to meet on a one-to-one basis with the emergency planning officer throughout the year. In total, seven meetings were held. These have been important communication forums covering emergency planning and business continuity arrangements, updates, along with coordinating arrangements in an agreed and supportive way.

#### Business continuity review activity 2023/24

- 4.15 The Council's business continuity plan review was completed in September 2023.
- 4.16 The DCC emergency planning officer completed proactive business continuity promotion work during the national business continuity awareness campaign in May 2023.

#### Advice, training and exercises 2023/24

- 4.17 The Council participated in three major business continuity exercises throughout 2023/24.
- 4.18 In addition, internal targeted support sessions were delivered by the emergency planning officer and SHSRM.

#### Events

- 4.19 In total 16 public events were supported by the emergency planning officer, SHSRM and other Council officers. Advice and support have been provided in the event planning stages and safety advisory groups have been implemented where a support group of this nature was required. In addition, event day safety inspections and other support activities have been undertaken.
- 4.20 Significant events of note during the year were Chesterfield Pride, 1940's market, Peddlers market and the Christmas seasonal light switch on. These events have attracted many tens of thousands of visitors to the borough.

#### Chesterfield Football Club – emergency planning officer updates

- 4.21 Officers have also supported Chesterfield Football Club with their emergency planning. The following activities have taken place.
- The football club's Contingency Plan was updated July 2023.
  - Annual audit of steward training was completed July 2023.
  - Checking of certification at the football club was completed July 2023.
  - An annual stadium inspection was completed July 2023.
  - Four Safety of Sports Grounds Advisory Group meetings were held.
  - Two Match Day inspections and reports were completed.
  - The football club completed an emergency planning exercise on 18 April 2023.

#### Major incidents

- 4.22 Storm Babet was declared a major incident. The storm occurred on 20 October 2023 and was the worst recorded flood event in the borough's history, far exceeding the impacts of the July 2007 floods. Over the course of

18 hours, a month's worth of rain fell on already saturated ground which caused rivers to burst their banks and inundate roads and communities.

- 4.23 The effects of the unprecedented amount of rainfall (80-100mm) were felt across the entire county with some rivers seeing their highest ever recorded levels resulting in widespread flooding.
- 4.24 The response to this flood event was an excellent example of cross department teamwork and our officers worked alongside partner organisations in response to the incident. An extensive recovery process was undertaken.
- 4.25 The response and initial recovery were coordinated by the Derbyshire Resilience Partnership Countywide and locally by the Council's emergency response team.
- 4.26 The flood event and recovery period covered the dates from 19 October to 26 November 2023. Notable events from this major incident were:
- I. A flood related death at Tapton Terrace and subsequent coroner's enquiry
  - II. Large scale power outages across Chesterfield
  - III. Severe highways impacts
  - IV. Activation and resourcing of the rest centre at Queens Park Sports Centre
  - V. Significant media interest, coverage, and press enquiries, including councillors supporting interviews
  - VI. A flood impact assessment form was introduced, and a flood database was developed.
  - VII. 226 Flood Impact Assessments were processed.
    - a. 53 were from businesses
    - b. 173 were from residents
  - VIII. The council undertook the administration of central government flood grants and applied council tax and business rate relief (Business Recovery Grant, Community Recovery Grant)
  - IX. An internal response debrief has been completed and officers have participated in multi-agency debriefs
  - X. A community drop-in session organised by the Environment agency was held on 27 November 2023, at The Saints Parish Centre. Officers provided support at this meeting.
  - XI. A flood investigation report (Section 19 report) is being developed.
  - XII. Ongoing incident learning is underway.
- 4.27 Other storms of note were Storm Debi in November 2023 and Storm Henk in January 2024. These required preparation resources but thankfully were not major incidents locally for the borough.

Work plan outline for 2024/25

4.28 Below outlines key emergency planning and business continuity activities that are planned for 2024/25.

- The Council's current service level agreement with DCC ends in March 2025. Contract negotiations will commence during 2024/25.
- The team will continue to raise awareness of emergency planning and business continuity across the organisation.
- DCC will arrange and deliver emergency planning training for key officers. Of note will be strategic and tactical level training for key officers.
- The Council will participate in multi-agency and internal emergency planning and business continuity exercises as arranged.
- Officers will continue to aid the flood grant schemes and will contribute to the lead local flood authority flood investigation (Storm Babet October 2023).
- Officers will continue to review and complete periodic updates of the emergency and business continuity plans, including:
  - Seasonal winter weather plans.
  - Completing the universal contact list updates (emergency contact information)
- Officers will continue to contribute towards the Storm Babet multi-agency debrief.
- Participate in the national business continuity awareness campaign.
- The emergency planning officer will continue to administer and support the Chesterfield Snow Warden Scheme.
- The health safety and risk service is being reshaped and will have increased resources to undertake emergency planning and business continuity duties. The restructure will ensure there is resilience to the Emergency Planning Liaison Officer role.

## **5 Alternative options**

5.1 The request for an annual update was requested by committee members in 2022 and has formed part of the annual update activity undertaken by the Strategic Health Safety and Risk Manager. No alternative options have been considered.

## **6 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money**

6.1 There are potentially very significant financial impacts to the Council which are as a result of significant emergency planning incidents. Costs can vary from the loss of a key asset, premise, loss of staff or power etc. The Council maintains financial reserves which are available for eventualities such as these, as well as the provision of insurance coverage

## **7 Implications for consideration – Legal**

7.1 The main legislation that applies to emergency planning and business continuity is the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. There are other statutory legislation and regulations that are also applicable. These vary from health and safety, building control and approved documents, along with the powers including enforcement by other agencies.

## **8 Implications for consideration – Human resources**

8.1 The service level agreement includes Derbyshire County Council providing resources to advise officers and elected members on emergency planning and business continuity arrangements. The Health, Safety and Risk service is being reshaped to further build the resilience and capacity available for these statutory functions.

## **9 Implications for consideration – Council plan**

9.1 Emergency planning and business continuity arrangements that are robust help support, underpin and inform the development and delivery of the Council Plan priorities.

## **10 Implications for consideration – Climate change**

10.1 This report has no direct negative impacts on climate change. Fundamentally, however, the subject and arrangements are directly affected by the changing climate, such as increased levels of flooding.

## **11 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity**

11.1 There are no adverse impacts noted as part of this report's findings.

## **12 Implications for consideration – Risk management**

12.1 Emergency planning and business continuity are important factors noted within the risk management strategy. The SHSRM is the client manager for the service level agreement (SLA) contractual arrangements with Derbyshire County Council (Derbyshire Resilience Partnership).

12.2 Chesterfield has a community risk register which is reviewed periodically. At this time there is 56 risks noted on the register. Risk assessments are completed by DCC on the Council's behalf as part of the SLA. These risks including the community risk register are public documents.

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
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'Lack of business continuity plan for the Council and each service area	H	H	A business continuity plan. Business impact assessment (business critical systems). DCC – SLA, includes fulfilling these duties on behalf of the Council. Derbyshire Resilience Partnership. Derbyshire prepared website contains BC promotion information. Emergency planning liaison role (SHSRM and service director). Very experienced EPO and SHSRM. Risk Management Strategy / Risk management group/ risk registers.	H	M
Failure of partner (DCC) to deliver contractual emergency planning officer role and Council's civil contingencies Act 2004 duties.	H	H	DCC – SLA in place (review and renew contract). Derbyshire Resilience Partnership Safety advisory groups. Very experienced EPO and SHSRM. Emergency plans, training and Exercises. Business continuity plan (*ICT disaster recovery plans). Winter plans. Universal contact list. Risk Management Strategy / Risk Management Group / risk registers.	H	M

### Decision information

<b>Key decision number</b>	Not a key decision
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All</b>

### Document information



<b>Report author</b>
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<b>Background documents</b>
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>
<b>Appendices to the report</b>