SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Audit & Governance Committee
24 January 2022

Surrey County Council Learning Points for the Business Continuity Aspects of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery

Purpose of the report:

This report has been submitted to the Audit & Governance Committee to highlight the main learning points from a business continuity perspective, in respect of both the Surrey County Council (SCC) and partnership response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The report has been submitted whilst the COVID response is still underway, and as such, some aspects of the report are interim findings such that these findings may change as further debriefs are held into the on-going and future phases of response to the Omicron variant and any new variants.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Audit & Governance Committee:

1.   Note the contents of the report.

2.   Agree the ongoing reporting requirements to the Committee for the ongoing response.

3.   Agree and action any further reports into specific areas of the response the Committee requires.

Introduction:

4.   The Covid-19 pandemic is an ongoing global pandemic caused by SARS-CoV-2. It was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of international concern on 20 January 2020, and later a pandemic on the 11 March 2020.

5.	As of 21 December 2021, more than 274 million cases have been confirmed, with more than 5.4 million deaths attributed. In the UK, we have seen 11.5 million cases and 147K deaths.

Context

6.	In advance of the pandemic and following the advice of Public Health England (PHE, now the UK Health Security Agency), Surrey County Council (SCC) had a contingency plan in place for pandemic influenza. The objectives of that plan were to minimise impacts to residents and staff, and to safeguard the health and wellbeing of Surrey's residents by minimising the disruptive effects of Covid-19 on its critical activities.

7.	SCC, is a CAT 1 responder as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, regs 2005, and also plays a key role in partnership working within the Local Resilience Forum (LRF), of which the objectives for response are to reduce harm to people and minimise impact on the environment and economy.

8.	On the 19th March, a major incident was declared by the LRF, and the following day a Strategic Co-ordinating Group was set up, with sub-groups established for key work streams to manage the response. The internal SCC governance structure for managing the response has remained consistent throughout the pandemic, with the partnership structures evolving throughout the pandemic as required.

9.	This report is designed to focus on the internal SCC response to Covid-19, highlighting lessons learned in the process from a business continuity perspective. The lessons learned have been captured by two separate feedback exercises held in six monthly intervals; as the response is ongoing, the final debrief is yet to be held. The first lessons learned process was recorded by colleagues from the Council's Strategic Commissioning Team and details from that report have been included with the second debrief being coordinated by the SCC Emergency Management Team.

Planning and Preparedness

10.	It is recognised that successful planning by the Council in collaboration with partners in the LRF led to a good level of preparedness. It was acknowledged that the business continuity plans for priority services were robust and well tested, including the flu plan that had been exercised on 10 March 2020.

11.	The Corporate Incident Management Plan was in place and became valuable in identifying critical activities within SCC over the initial days and weeks of the pandemic.

12.	Through the Emergency Management Team (EMT), support had been provided to all directorates and services, ensuring service business continuity plans were in date and exercised; multi-agency planning events had also been held prior to the pandemic, which helped services

6

and relevant officers within services to have tested their plans with partners to identify any dependencies or conflicts between plans.

13. However, there is a recognition that the scope, scale and length of this incident presented challenges for which it is not entirely unexpected for which the Council could not have fully planned– for instance, business impact analysis (BIA) for most services identify impact over a short time frame of one month, this particular incident has lasted over two years.

14. Nonetheless, the overall council preparedness was effective with planning being recognised as providing a good state of readiness.

Response

15. The Council acted quickly and decisively implementing a response to the pandemic. It has been recognised both by internal and external stakeholders that the Chief Executive and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) were quick to provide strategic direction which enabled the response objectives to be established and provide confidence within the organisation.

16. The Council's overall response was effective and contributed to successful partnership working internally and externally to the organisation. Further, the Council's ability to be decisive in its response enabled core services to remain running for residents, staff were able to demonstrate resilience and flexibility, with a move to an agile working model.

17. The initial impacts of the COVID Pandemic occurred over time between early February and the 19th February and SCC emergency response arrangements were put in arrangements ahead of the first partnership SCG being held on 20 March. This assisted SCC to able to ensure that the governance structures within the council and wider partnership were established.

18. The governance arrangements enabled information flows throughout the council and externally to partners and residents. The SCC Operations (Ops) Group was formed on 18th February and this group enabled Covid-related matters to be raised internally to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT); in addition, it also enabled business as usual risks and workstreams to be monitored and addressed where needed.

Impacts on SCC Service Delivery

19. The Ops worked across all SCC frontline line services ensuring that wherever possible services continued to be provided to residents, albeit this was often in different ways to business as usual. The group worked closely with the partnership response coordinated under the command and control of the Surrey Strategy Coordinating Group.

20. The SCC Business Continuity Management System categories SCC Services, (see appendix 1). This pre-designation allows for the

prioritisation of services providing frontline support to residents and communities or where a service is critical to this service provision.

21. The following four examples shows where P1 services were impacted during the response to the COVID Response,

21.1 **Public Health Team** - The Director of Public Health (DPH) had a crucial role in the design and delivery of the local public health response to the COVID-19 Outbreak linking the national and regional levels with the local Surrey Response. This built on long standing health protection experience form other disease outbreaks. The council had outbreak control plans in place focusing on identifying and containing potential outbreaks in places such as schools, care homes and workplaces. This was closely coordinated with the NHS, Public Health England (now UK Health Security Agency, UKSHA) and other local partners. The key outcome was to provide an organised local system that works in tandem with Public Health England health protection teams and other relevant partners.

21.2 To support the work of the DPH new workstreams were needed to be developed by SCC services during the COVID-19 response. These have included, but are not limited to,

- SCC Customers Services providing support to the National Track and Tracing programme in Surrey and the National Self-Isolation Framework aimed and supporting residents who were Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or were self-isolating linking them to local support arrangements that were put in place.

- The Bucks and Surrey Trading Standards Team, working with Environmental Health Officers engaged with local businesses to encourage compliance with COVID-19 Regulations, provide an explanation of the changing guidance for businesses, and where necessary take enforcement action.

- The embedding of SCC Communication Officers with the DPH Team to provide direct support to ensure that there was the flow of trusted information to residents in a timely manner.

21.3 **Adult Social Care –** In the first months of the COVID response the UK government had a policy of moving covid-19 pandemic patients from hospitals to care homes that led to an increase of cases in nursing and care homes. At the very early stages this was expatiated by the lack in the supply of PPE at the required levels.

21.4 Through the Ops group and working with the Surrey with partners a PPE supply was established for providers. The first iteration of the services was established with the support of military planners and involved the distribution of stocks procured through the ORBIS procurement team and those provided by Her Majesty's Government (HMG). During the response this role transferred to the ORBIS Procurement Team to maintain. The PPE Procurement

supported Care Homes, Providers, Schools, and voluntary services.

21.5 The Ops Group, working with the partner organisations and supported the provision of testing to care homes once test kits become available for COVID -19. This included providing support for the testing of residents and the use of the Military Mobile testing Units, which were deployed to homes where outbreaks were suspected. Following the national development of the testing services this has transitioned to the current systems and national testing requirements.

21.6 Under the leadership of Dave Hill, the then Executive Director of Children, Lifelong Learning and Culture, SCC property services worked with NHS partners to establish the facility at Headley Court to provide 'step down' support for those residents being discharged from hospital but required a higher level of rehabilitation.

21.7 **Schools**- During the response to the COVID outbreak SCC OPs Group supported the Education & Lifelong Learning, Children, Families & Learning Service in their role of liaising with Surrey Schools. The aim being to assist in the understanding of the frequent changes to the guidance and regulation that Head Teachers were required to comply with. Like the work to support Care Homes this included the provision of PPE and Testing capacity at the different phases of the return and the remote working required while the UK was in 'Lockdown'. The group also allowed for direct discussions with the Public Health Team and SCC Communications Teams to provide the timely information to parents and Head Teachers.

21.8 The Ops Group worked to ensure that as changes were made to way education was delivered through schools the SCC services like, school transport or new testing requirements for students and staff were in place in line with the arrangements put in place by head teachers and their teams.

21.9 **Coronial Services and Registration** – Through the modelling and forecasting provided there was work commissioned to provide extra body storage capacity in the Death Management Pathway. Initial increase in the capacity was undertaken through the standing Business Continuity arrangements with the use of temporary storage units being provided to hospital mortuaries.

21.10 This developed alongside the increasing numbers of bodies to having storage at the Fire Brigade Headquarters and then with the use of the 'vet labs' at Surrey University. The move to the site was support by SCC Property Services and the Strategic Lead-Partnerships Policy & Communities, who ensured liaison with faith and community groups.

21.11 There are now plans in place to increase the resilience of the body storage with a potential County Body Storge site being

developed and the possible move to a County Mortuary to support the role of the Coroner.

21.12 To support the registering of births and deaths the Registration and Nationality Service moved to online service to residents replacing the existing service provision. This was developed alongside the demands caused by the cancellation or postponement of weddings because of the Government guidance at the time.

Partnership Working

22. Through the plans established by the LRF and under the direction of the SCG, partners from across Surrey and the region worked to ensure a shared common understanding of the pandemic was held by all service areas within SCC, enabling a common sense of identity and purpose. Specialist services were engaged, and existing relationships built on.

23. There was overall good engagement between the services supporting the crisis. Flexible working enabled the right services to be represented at the correct meetings and engage through the correct channels. Individuals across the services were identified and their subject matter expertise utilised to provide relevant information to support decision making. Services maintained good relationships external to the organisation, enabling wider information sharing and intelligence gathering with partners.

Governance and Decision Making

24. Efficient, consistent, and decisive leadership enabled people to feel confident in CLT's ability to manage the crisis. Collaboration was seen across the whole organisation with cross-service working. CLT delegated responsibilities and decision making through the appropriate directorates, this was recognised with the introduction of Ops Group initially chaired by the then Director for Strategic Commissioning, and from 24th September 2020, chaired by the Environment, Transport and Infrastructure Executive Director. This group enabled decisions and governance to be made and monitored, with escalation to the CLT as required. The Ops Group was created to allow a platform to co-ordinate workstreams, escalate concerns and fast-track important decisions where needed across services. The Ops Group enabled all services to stay connected and to ensure there was no duplication of work.

25. These governance arrangements and associated operating procedures were established at the start of the crisis, thus enabling robust and efficient decision-making at all levels. Audit trails for decision making were completed with clear recorded information of all decisions and actions, which enabled not only accountability but transparency across the council. Internal reporting structures worked well with the wider Local Resilience Forum (LRF) structure. Data driven decision-making was crucial in this incident, with a clear "one truth picture" created.

6

Communications and Information Sharing

26. In the COVID-19 response, the term communications covered several disciplines, including internal, external, and social media. Overall internal and external communications was seen to be strong and industry-leading throughout the crisis. The Council's comms teams worked well within their service areas creating timely comms to enable accurate information sharing. Internal communications enabled all staff to stay connected and receive the most up to date guidance, which in turn, enabled the Council to keep its residents and customers safe and informed. Good feedback was received for executive management blogs published across internal platforms. The communications team supported all groups within the response structure, and this was considered valuable. Updates on national policy, although complicated at times, was shared widely within the response groups and supported decision-making and updates to the response road maps.

27. The SCC Communication Team led by the SCC Strategic Director – Communications established the partnership Multi-Agency Information Group (MIG) to coordinate a partnership communications network. This allowed for communication to residents and communities were established promptly with channels such as the community helpline and social media platforms being used, which in turn, enabled residents to stay well informed.

28. Through debriefs with SCC Staff and Surrey Partners it was highlighted that whilst local comms was seen to have worked well, the frequent and often last-minute changes to communication messages at the National level presented a challenge to providing timely communications to residents. This was raised to the Central Government Officers at the time and subsequential in debriefing and reporting.

Resource and Redeployment

29. The Council staff responded well to a 'call to arms', and a successful redeployment programme was achieved which enabled staff to be moved within the organisation to support the most critical services in response to pressures arising at key points throughout the pandemic. The redeployment process was supported by strong business continuity plans, with identified priority services receiving support first.

30. The redeployment across the council enabled a crisis response as well as maintaining critical activities. Staff that had been redeployed were well supported by the mobilisation team and although some anxiety was felt by individuals at times due to the pressures arising in certain teams, all staff generally were able to work through the challenges. Timeframes for much of this redeployment were unknown at the start of the incident, and this caused concern amongst some individuals and their line managers, but this was monitored through Ops Group and processes were developed throughout the year which helped bring certainty to officers and their managers.

Recovery

21. The Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) was stood up on 6 April 2020 with the aim to restore the humanitarian, economic, environmental and infrastructure wellbeing, conditions and resilience of Surrey. As part of its remit, the RCG had responsibility for overseeing and co-ordinating the restoring and restarting of essential services and their transition to business as usual, as well as capturing lessons learned.

22. While acknowledging the severe immediate and longer-term negative effects of the pandemic on individuals, communities and the economy, the RCG worked to address, the group also aimed to capture some of the positive changes that responding to and recovering from the pandemic has brought about in our county, which have been captured by the RCG to help build forward better.

Concurrent Risk and Response

23. Throughout the response there has been a need to monitor and where necessary respond to other risks and threats as they emerge, often adapting response plans to address the COVID risks at the time of the incidents. This has included:

- Safe working practices for staff and residents during flooding incidents where evacuations and deployment of Temporary Flood Defences are required

- Inclusion of COVID-19 Safety measures at location used for bottle water distribution during water outages in communities during the COVID-19 outbreak

- Changes to Rest Centres and evacuation locations to maintain social distancing and safety for incidents such as, Heathland Fire and WWII bomb evacuations

- Managing the November 4th change of the UK Terrorism Threat Level from Substantial (an attack is likely) to Severe (an attack is highly likely) ensuring that new security arrangements at SCC buildings fits with COVID Safety requirements

Conclusions:

25. Covid-19 has had a profound impact globally, national and within Surrey and is likely to be a defining moment in the history of the early 21st century. Impacts have been seen across community health, economy and society resulting in ongoing changes to our way of life and the wellbeing of our residents. As we have seen, some of the actions and processes put in place as part of the response to the pandemic have been beneficial and will be integrated into service and operational plans going forward for the benefit of our residents. There has also been learning from how SCC as an organisation was able to withstand the

6

sudden impact of the pandemic. It was identified that those services who had Business Continuity Plans that had been previously tested and exercised where more resilient to the pressures imposed by Covid-19.

26. The main areas that have been highlighted where the work in the response to the COVID-19 response include,

- **Greater use of digital solutions.** In the early stages of the response there were difficulties in translating data and intelligence into useable information to support key decisions. This was addressed through the creation of a Tactical Data and Analytics Cell (TAIC), which was able to support the decision making for activities including increasing body storage and the opening of the facility at Headley Court to provide greater capacity for hospital discharges.

   This work required the Data Sharing across partners and did require changes to standing practices to ensure that demands of the response were met. The Surrey partnership Multi Agency Information Sharing Protocol provide a good framework for this, but Standing Operating Procedures had to be developed to deal with the specific issues at the time.

   The learning from the response is being including in the forming of the Surrey Office of Data and Analytics (SODA). This is a virtual partnership of organisations, from across health and social care who will work collaboratively to develop data-led insight to strengthen the approach to predictive and preventative solutions allowing interventions to be made as early as possible.

- **Addressing inequalities.** It has been highlighted that there is a need to ensure that the ongoing response to COVID and future incidents has a high consideration to addressing inequalities for our residents. In any response, the saving of lives and preventing harm are an immediate consideration, however for protracted incidents such as COVID it has been highlighted that there is a need to regularly review and change arrangements to consider any inequalities created.

   SCC plans and procedures are being changed to include the need to undertake Equality and Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessments and will include the relevant materials required for this to be done.

   Several activities during the response highlighted the importance of providing equal opportunities for all residents, including being to be able to access Surrey open spaces, newly established services such as testing and vaccination, and support when services are not being delivered in the normal way.

- **Maintaining an Agile Workforce.** The AGILE programme provided staff with the means to work from other locations or at home. Staff have highlighted that the systems are robust and

were able to cope with a significant increase in remote working during the COVID-19 response.

Staff from across the County Council also showed a high level of flexibility and were redeployed into roles to support the response or worked differently to continue to provide services to residents.

This often meant either long periods of home working or working in sometimes stressful roles, away from their normal line management and support. It was recognised that colleagues new to the Council or where a home situation was less conducive to home working meant that colleagues were adversely affected to a greater degree. Support has been provided and is expected to be needed as we establish not only the new working practices under AGILE working, but also to the new working environments post COVID-19.

Financial and value for money implications

27. The response to the pandemic was supported in large part financially by Government funding, although the indirect impacts of the pandemic have created more fundamental pressures for services across the Council. To ensure that the Council can demonstrate and attract further funding to support these impacts of the pandemic, finance teams within the County Council, district and borough councils, health and those working within the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) will continue reporting Covid-19 related expenditure and income loss to ensure the pressure is known externally and internally as well as tracking the financial effects of Covid-19 into future years. The financial effects of the changes identified within this report will need to be taken account of in the financial planning of relevant organisations.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

28. The associated policies support the planning for the COVID-19 response were assessed as having a potential adverse impact on groups and individuals and as such a Community Impact Assessment was undertaken (CIA) was undertaken at the earliest opportunity and was maintained as the response progressed. The aim being to understand how inequalities would be identified, and consideration given to how they would be reduced. This included how an alternative plans and policies would be needed to lessen this effect and serve to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

29. The CIA was based on the partnership response and considered how information and data would be collected to enable a judgment on the extent of impact on the nine equality categories. (religious belief, political opinion, race, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, people with dependants or without).

30. The CIA can be found at Surrey Covid-19 Recovery Community Impact Assessment (surreycc.gov.uk).

Risk Management Implications

31. The risk of a Pandemic had been identified as VERY HIGH by both the UK and Surrey Community Risk Registers for some years before the COVID -19 outbreak, meaning that planning had been undertaken for such an event, albeit at the time the main risk was seen from Influenza rather than COVID.

32. The risk of a further pandemic will remain as VERY HIGH for the foreseeable future, alongside other the risk of other diseases that are have been reported by the World Health Organisation. https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news

Next steps:

33. The main effort for the current phase of the Council's COVID-19 response is to support the new planning and regulatory requirements to address the Omicron Variant.

34. Alongside this work, there is also a continued focus on the following aspects of the response:

- Maintain the capacity to respond to support all residents in Surrey during any further variant or response required due to COVID-19, having a high regard for vulnerable residents and hard to reach communities

- Continue to support the testing, vaccinations and other ongoing work in support of the COVID-19 activities.

- Implement and continue to identify the learning points from the current COVID-19 response to improve the resilience of the SCC services to residents

- Support SCC staff after what has been a challenging period and ensure that issues relating to the health and wellbeing are addressed

- Start the preparation for the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, to be led by the Rt Hon Baroness Heather Hallett DBE

- Maintain the SCC response to other risks and threats in Surrey by working with our partners and supporting our residents

----

Report contact:
Ian Good- Head of Emergency Management, Surrey County Council

Contact details:
Telephone – 07968 834593
Email   - ian.good@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

Surrey Local Resilience Forum (2021) *Building Forward Better, Sustaining Improved Behaviours, practices and process arising from the COVID-19 pandemic,* Recovery Coordinating Group, July 2021.

6

Appendix 1

Service Prioritisation January 2021

Group A: Priority services that we won't, at this stage, ask to identify "potential redeployees" (because they are using all resources for priority work and/or arranging redeployments within their teams and from volunteers already)	Group B: Priority services that we will ask to think carefully about what parts of their service are most critical, how they will manage with increased sickness, and whether there are any residual "potential redeployees"	Group C: Services that will be asked to identify as many "potential redeployees" as possible, thinking creatively about what they could also stop or do differently
Adult Social Care LD Autism and Transition	IT and Digital	All other services
Adult Social Care Service Delivery	Land and Assets	
Mental Health	Registration & Nationality	
Children's Services	Highways	
CFLC Commissioning	Waste	
Communications	Education	
Customer Services	HROD	
Public Health	Strategic Commissioning	
Coroners	Transformation	
Fire & Rescue (e.g. retained firefighters)	Libraries	
Trading Standards	Finance	
Emergency Management and Resilience Team	Procurement	
Health and Safety	Insight, Analytics and Intelligence	

Appendix 2- Summary of Recommendations from SCC Interim Debriefs

- The Council should make best use of the EMRT by raising its profile and strengthening its role within the rest of the organisation

- There should be greater sharing of knowledge and processes between services in peace time to enable best practice, this should include business continuity plans but is not limited to

- There is a need for top management support on the importance of business continuity and embedding it within the organisation

- Consideration should be given to organisation-wide contingency plans and plans that deal with prolonged incidents

- Dedicated resource within teams to support business continuity within the different directorates

- Establish governance such as Ops Group as early as reasonably practicable

- Subject matter expertise is widely sought both internally and externally, subject matter experts should be engaged with at the earliest opportunity

- Maintaining the relationships established during the crisis on return to business as usual is important

- The role of the Emergency Management team identified early at the start of the crisis so that its expertise could be utilised

- Establishing how members could be utilised in a major incident so that public accountability is gained i.e. Council expenditure

- Exploring how decision making can be empowered at more levels so that not all decisions are required to be made by the CLT. The introduction of Ops Group became key in the response to the major incident, this structure should be considered for future incidents, with the appropriate delegated authority.

- Embedding subject matter experts from the communications team into the services to provide guidance and advice at the start of a crisis

- Simplifying national communications which are received, so that demand on contact centres does not become overwhelming

- Continuing relationships established during the response in business-as-usual times will enable future incidents to be managed appropriately

- Transferable skills identified in peace time so suitable redeployment can happen at pace in a crisis

- Sharing redeployment terms and conditions in advance so staff and their substantive managers have a good understanding of expectations.

- Form a pool of resources whereby individuals are identified and ready to deploy as and when required. This process needs to be established formally within SCC with CLT sign off, the individuals should be clear on skill set, job function, rotas.

Appendix 3 – Explanation of LRF, SCG and Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

1. **Local Resilience Forum**

Local resilience forums (LRFs) are multi-agency partnerships made up of representatives from local public services. The geographical area the forums cover is based on police areas.

The LRFs aim to plan and prepare for localised incidents and catastrophic emergencies. They work to identify potential risks and produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on their local communities.

There is more information for local resilience forums, including on self-assessment, peer review and improvement, in the role of Local Resilience Forums: a reference document. (The_role_of_Local_Resilience_Forums-_A_reference_document_v2_July_2013.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk))

The purpose of a **Strategic Co-Ordinating Group (SCG)** is to take overall responsibility for the multi-agency management of an incident and establish a strategic framework within which lower levels of command and co-ordinating groups will work. Its guiding objectives are:

- Protect and preserve life
- Contain the incident: mitigate and minimise its impacts; maintain critical infrastructure and essential services
- Create conditions for recovery: promote restoration and improvement activity in the aftermath of an incident to return to the new normality

It will normally be the role of the police to co-ordinate activity with other organisations and therefore to chair the SCG. The police will usually chair the group where:

- There is an immediate threat to human life
- There is a possibility that the emergency was a result of criminal or terrorist activity
- There are significant public order implications
- In other types of emergency, for example certain health or maritime scenarios, an agency other than the police may initiate and lead the group

2. Major Incident

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 gives the definition of the term **Major Incident** as the following: 'An event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency'.

A Major Incident is beyond the scope of business-as-usual operations, and is likely to involve serious harm, damage, disruption or risk to human life or welfare, essential services, the environment, or national security.

A Major Incident may involve a single-agency response, although it is more likely to require a multi-agency response, which may be in the form of multi-agency support to a lead responder.

The severity of the consequences associated with a Major Incident are likely to constrain or complicate the ability of responders to resource and manage the incident, although a Major Incident is unlikely to affect all responders equally.

An officer of any rank from one of the Category 1 responders can declare a Major Incident if they consider the criteria has been met. It may be that what is considered a Major Incident by one of the category 1 responders may not be so to another. Despite this, each of the Category 1 responders will attend with an appropriate response, as outlined in their own organisation's Major Incident procedure manuals. This will apply even if they are likely to be employed in a standby capacity and will not be directly involved in the incident.

3. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004

The Civil Contingencies Act establishes a legislative framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom. It imposes a clear set of roles and responsibilities on those organisations with a role to play in preparing for and responding to emergencies. Local authorities are a Category 1 responder under the Act, and have a key role to play in respect in discharging their duties in the legislation.

Provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act

The Act, and accompanying Regulations and guidance, delivers a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty first century. The Act is separated into two parts: local arrangements for civil protection (Part 1) and emergency powers (Part 2).

Part 1 of the Act, the supporting Regulations and statutory guidance *Emergency Preparedness*, establish a clear set of roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at the local level. Local responders are divided into two categories, with a different set of duties applying to each.

Category 1 responders are those organisations at the core of emergency response (e.g. emergency services, local authorities, NHS bodies). Category 1 responders are subject to the full set of civil protection duties. These include:

- assessing the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning in the form of a Community Risk Register;
- Put in place emergency plans.
- Create business continuity plans to ensure that they can continue to exercise critical functions in the event of an emergency.
- Make information available to the public about civil protection matters, and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.
- Share information with other local responders to enhance coordination.
- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency.
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (Local Authorities only).

Category 2 responders are required to co-operate and share information with other Category 1 and 2 responders to ensure that they are well integrated within wider emergency planning frameworks and contribute their expertise on risks and essential services in the form of the Local Resilience Forums.

The detail of the role of responders and indicators of mandatory and areas of best practice has been provided by the Cabinet Office, Civil Contingencies Secretariat and aims to clarify what is expected of Category 1 and 2 responders in England and Wales in relation to:

- the duties within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA)

- the associated Contingency Planning Regulations 2005 (Regulations) and guidance

- the National Resilience Capabilities Programme (NRCP); and

- emergency response and recover

Expectation_and_Indicators_of_Good_Practice_Set_for_category_1_2_Responders.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

The Military and Voluntary Sector are neither category 1 nor 2 responders but work with the LRF to provide support to residents in a crisis.

The requests for, and deployment of Military resource and personal is covered by the Joint Doctrine Publication 02: UK Operations: The Defence Contribution to Resilience (Fourth edition) (publishing.service.gov.uk)