

# WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## EXECUTIVE

8 FEBRUARY 2022

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### Waverley Borough Council Emergency Plan

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**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Paul Follows

**Head of Service:** Richard Homewood

**Key decision:** Yes

**Access:** Part Exempt

#### **Note pursuant to Section 100B(5) of the Local Government Act 1972**

Annexe A to this report contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraphs **1 and 3** of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:

**Paragraph 1 Information relating to any individual**

**Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**

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#### **1. Purpose and summary**

1.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 established a new legislative framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom. It imposed 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.

1.2 One of those duties under the Act is to put in place emergency plans. In 2011 the Cabinet Office stated:

*For an emergency plan to be valid, it must be accepted as the stated policy of the organisation or Category 1 responders on whose behalf it has been produced. For this to happen, the key decision makers in an organisation must have an awareness of the plan and, through sign-off and other initiatives, have accepted part ownership of it.*

1.3 The attached emergency plan is therefore presented for consideration and comment by the Executive prior to submission to the Council for approval. The Emergency Plan is an operational document and contains a large amount of personal data and confidential details required to activate it in an emergency. The attached version is a public version in which all personal data and operational detail has been redacted to comply with GDPR and security requirements. Members of

the Executive will have seen the full version of the Emergency Plan recently during a private briefing.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Executive recommend approval and adoption of the attached Emergency Plan.
- 2.2 That authority to make minor consequential grammatical and technical changes to the text, contact details etc. be delegated to the Head of Service in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

## **3. Reason for the recommendation**

- 3.1 To ensure the Council has a robust Emergency Plan in place in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

## **4. Background**

- 4.1 The [Civil Contingencies Act](#), and accompanying non-legislative measures, delivered a single framework for civil protection in the UK. The Act is separated into 2 substantive parts: local arrangements for civil protection (Part 1); and emergency powers (Part 2).
- 4.2 Part 1 of the Act and 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. The Act divides local responders into 2 categories, imposing a different set of duties on each.
- 4.3 Those in Category 1 are organisations at the core of the response to most emergencies (the emergency services, local authorities Districts, Boroughs, Unitary and County Councils) NHS bodies). Category 1 responders are subject to the full set of civil protection duties. They will be required to:
  - assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
  - **put in place emergency plans**
  - put in place business continuity management arrangements
  - put in place arrangements to 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 co-ordination
  - co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency
  - provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (local authorities only)

- 4.4 Category 2 organisations (the Health and Safety Executive, transport and utility companies) are 'co-operating bodies'. They are less likely to be involved in the heart of planning work but will be heavily involved in incidents that affect their own sector. Category 2 responders have a lesser set of duties - co-operating and sharing relevant information with other Category 1 and 2 responders.
- 4.5 Category 1 and 2 organisations come together to form and fund 'local resilience forums' (based on police areas) which facilitate coordination and co-operation between responders at the local level.
- 4.6 Part 2 of the Act updates the 1920 Emergency Powers Act to reflect the developments in the intervening years and the current and future risk profile. It allows for the making of temporary special legislation (emergency regulations) to help deal with the most serious of emergencies.
- 4.7 The attached Emergency Plan has been reviewed and updated. It seeks to ensure arrangements are in place for the Council to respond swiftly and effectively to any civil emergency which may affect the borough alongside and in support for the emergency services.
- 4.8 Co-operation between organisations is fundamental to emergency preparedness. The principal mechanism for multi-agency co-operation at the local level is the Local Resilience Forum. This plan seeks to provide an overview of the emergency planning, response and recovery process in the borough and is written to align with other emergency plans produced under Surrey's Local Resilience Forum. The Local Resilience Forum plays a vital role in the response phase of an emergency via tactical and strategic command groups where there is multi-agency coordination of assets, activities, priorities and strategic direction. This plan sets out how the Council will work with and support the emergency services under the terms of the Joint Emergency Interoperability Programme.
- 4.9 Whilst Town and Parish Councils are not recognised as category 1 or 2 responders in national legislation, Waverley Borough Council recognises the critical and valuable role Town and Parish councillors can play in the event of an emergency in terms of impact assessment, identifying problems and vulnerabilities in their community that may require priority attention and feeding them back to the relevant recovery group. They also have an important role in disseminating credible information and advice back to the community, assisting to maintain community cohesion and providing public reassurance. Further information on the role of Elected Members in the recovery process can be found in the National Recovery Guidance at [Emergency Response and Recovery 5th edition October 2013.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) The Council will continue to work with Town and Parish Councils to further refine communication and working arrangements with Town and Parish Councils in the event of an emergency.
- 4.10 This Emergency Plan is supported at borough and LRF levels by a range of specific plans such as the multi-agency flood plan, Severe Weather plan, internal Business Continuity Plans and the Local Outbreak Control Plan
- 4.11 The generic term 'emergency' can cover a wide range of circumstances and mean different things to different people. It is important to recognise that this plan relates to civil emergencies and major incidents where an event or situation threatens

serious damage to human welfare or the environment in excess of that which can be dealt with by the public services operating under normal circumstances, requiring the special mobilisation and organisation of those services and the deployment of local authority staff and resources to support the emergency services and the recovery process.

- 4.12 Other plans and services are in place for the Council to respond to incidents affecting any immediate threats to the welfare of individuals, individual households or small numbers of people through our standard operational procedures and through the Council's out of hours service.

## **5. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan**

- 5.1 The Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025 identifies 'having robust business continuity plans in place to meet future emergencies and challenges to our ability to deliver services' as a priority to protect the health and well-being of our residents.
- 5.2 It also identifies 'working closely with the Local Resilience Forum' as a priority in order to achieve this.
- 5.3 Going forward in pursuit of the strategic priority of exploring new ways of working and exploring shared opportunities with other local authorities, we will need to amend the plan to recognise the creation of a single Senior Management Team across Waverley and Guildford and engage with Guildford BC emergency planning and Surrey LRF colleagues to identify potential areas where collaboration can build greater resilience in our response to emergencies.

## **6. Implications of decision**

### **6.1 Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)**

Provision is made within existing budgets to deliver our duties and responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 in respect of Emergency Planning.

### **6.2 Risk management**

Significant risks to the community are regularly reviewed through the Surrey Local Resilience Forum and set out in the Community Risk Register. At a borough level key risks are also identified in the Corporate Risk Register.

### **6.3 Legal**

Council approval of the Borough Emergency Plan is required under the provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and the statutory requirements supporting the development of the Plan are set out within the report.

### **6.4 Equality, diversity and inclusion**

Operational plans supporting this Emergency Plan focus on at least 3 key groupings of people - the vulnerable, victims (including survivors, family and friends) and responder personnel.

Vulnerable people may be less able to help themselves in an emergency than self-reliant people. Those who are vulnerable will vary depending on the nature of the emergency. Plans include support for those with mobility difficulties (those with physical disabilities or pregnant women); those with mental health difficulties; and others who are dependent, such as children.

A Vulnerable Persons List is owned and maintained by Surrey County Council. There is tight control over access to it and activation must be agreed in group setting. It can be searched by post code in the event of an emergency to identify those vulnerable persons who might be affected by the emergency. Other category 2 responders also maintain voluntary registers of vulnerable people (e.g. Thames Water).

Victims of an emergency - which includes not only those directly affected but also those who, as family and friends, suffer bereavement or the anxiety of not knowing what has happened.

Responder personnel should also be considered. Plans sometimes place unrealistic expectations on management and personnel. Organisations should ensure their plans give due consideration to the welfare of their own personnel. For instance, the emergency services have health and safety procedures which determine shift patterns and check for levels of stress.

## **6.5 Climate emergency declaration**

The Climate emergency declaration highlights the importance of having robust emergency plans in place. Planning for mitigation of the impacts of Climate change and potentially more severe and more frequent weather events is increasingly important in developing plans for preventing an emergency and for reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency.

## **7. Consultation and engagement**

- Consultation with the Surrey Local Resilience Forum to ensure the plan aligns with strategic level and operational LRF plans.
- Presentation to Members on Emergency Planning
- Future engagement with Town and Parish Councils on their role in dealing with emergencies

## **8. Other options considered**

8.1 The adoption of the Emergency Plan is a statutory requirement. Going forward opportunities for collaboration with Guildford BC to build greater resilience in our response capability will be explored.

## **9. Governance journey**

9.1

Executive

8 February 2022

**Annexes:**

Annexe A: Waverley Borough Council Emergency Plan

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**Background Papers**

There are / are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

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Agreed and signed off by:  
Legal Services: date  
Head of Finance: date  
Strategic Director: date  
Portfolio Holder: date