

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
CABINET AND CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
18 APRIL 2016

REPORT BY THE CONTINGENCY PLANNING MANAGER

RESILIENCE PLANNING

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Further to a request by the Committee, this paper sets out the position of the Council's emergency planning and resilience activities.

2 Contingency Planning and Resilience

- 2.1 All local authorities are designated Category 1 Responders and as such have a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (and accompanying Statutory Guidance) to undertake a range of contingency planning activities.¹
- 2.2 Several Council services may be called upon to respond to an emergency in the community, to support the responding emergency services and affected residents. The corporate Contingency Management Plan contains details of the type and scale of emergency that might be faced, the call-out arrangements, the tactical and strategic management arrangements, and looks towards recovery management. This plan is regularly reviewed and updated when required, and validation exercises are conducted each year.
- 2.3 In addition to preparing and overseeing contingency plans and emergency management arrangements that enable us to respond to a major emergency in the community, local authorities must also have business continuity plans that will enable them to deliver those services in the face of disruption. The Corporate Business Continuity Strategy sets out the requirements for engagement in business continuity planning at all levels across the authority. The corporate Contingency Planning Team is now working with colleagues to better integrate major emergency and business continuity planning with corporate risk management, procurement

¹ Set out in Annex A to this report

and audit so as to ensure that contingency planning is thoroughly integrated.

- 2.4 The attached Annex A describes in more detail the basis upon which we undertake contingency planning, the types of incidents we respond to, and the work we do with local and regional partners to ensure that our contingency plans and major emergency management arrangements are fully integrated.

3 Community Resilience

- 3.1 Working with communities to increase their resilience, particularly in the early stages of a major incident or emergency, is becoming an increasingly important area of work for local authorities and their local emergency services partners. The majority of major incidents in London will impact directly on residents and business for a few hours. This could be because of an evacuation of an area due to the incident, it could be an electricity, gas or water outage for a few hours, or it could be disruption to travelling because of severe weather.
- 3.2 Residents can help themselves enormously and improve their self-resilience with a little preparation. We distributed a Home Emergency Plan guidance document in 2011 to all households, and the document is available via the Council's website. This guidance encourages residents to think about where their family would gather in an evacuation, to have a 'grab-bag' with essential documents ready to take in the event of being evacuated, and to have bottled water and some tinned food, etc, at home in case of an evacuation.
- 3.3 We are currently taking steps to bring to people's attention the utilities Priority Services Registers. These enable the elderly and other vulnerable people to register with their electricity, gas and water providers so that they may receive targeted help during outages.
- 3.4 Local authorities have a statutory duty to encourage local businesses, particularly small and medium sized, and local voluntary organisations to undertake business continuity planning. We reach out to business through the various business forum distribution lists maintained by Planning and Borough Development, by our attendance at some business resilience forums and Community Security Zones, and with occasional articles in BusinessDirect. We have in the past leafleted and visited individual businesses; however, this proved to be an ineffective method. We also liaise with the Portobello Business Centre and the Kensington and Chelsea Social Council who will circulate information for us.

4 Conclusion

4.1 The Committee is invited to receive this position paper.

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONTINGENCY PLANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

What we do and why we do it

It was the widespread lack of or limited integrated emergency management planning, and particularly the lack of business continuity planning, by local authorities generally that led to our inclusion as a Category 1 Responder in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which gives local authorities a statutory duty to:

- Assess the risk of an emergency occurring and use this information to inform contingency planning;
- Put in place and maintain emergency plans and business continuity plans for the purpose of ensuring that if an emergency occurs the Council is able to continue to perform its critical functions;
- Maintain plans to prevent, reduce, control or mitigate the emergency;
- 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 coordination;
- Cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency; and
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

How we do it

A corporate Contingency Planning Team (CPT) assess risks, writes and maintains the corporate-level emergency and business continuity plans, and provides a Borough Emergency Control Centre and emergency management procedures that will enable the Council to respond to any major incident or emergency in the community and business continuity disruption to services. Colleagues across the departments contribute to this process, and also produce their own service contingency plans.

The CPT undertakes extensive liaison with colleagues throughout the authority, and provides a wide range of emergency management and response training modules, workshops, tests and exercises to ensure that a wide range of staff are aware of their roles in an emergency, and to ensure that the plans are validated.

The CPT also undertakes extensive liaison on behalf of the authority with other Category 1 and 2 Responders (emergency services, health sector, the Environment Agency, utilities, the military, local and regional government) and participates in the development of borough, sub-regional and regional multi-agency contingency plans and emergency management arrangements.

In addition to preparing and overseeing contingency plans and emergency management arrangements that enable us to respond to a major emergency in the community, local authorities must also have business continuity plans that will enable them to deliver those services in the face of disruption. Disruption could result from, for example, a lack of staff because of severe weather, disruption to road and public transport, loss of access to offices and computer systems, or the need to prioritise services to respond to the incident.

All Council services, within their Departments, have a priority rating that reflects their criticality:

- P1 – service must be recovered within 24 hours
- P2 – service must be recovered within 48 hours
- P3 – service must be recovered within 7 days
- P4 – resources available to support continuity of P1 and P2 services

P1 and P2 services have Service Continuity Plans that consider how a range of disruption scenarios could affect the delivery of their high priority services, and document how that service will continue despite disruption.

Our contingency plans and emergency management arrangements reflect and comply with the Minimum Standards for London, a set of standards monitored by the Local Authorities Panel of the London Resilience Forum and subject to peer-review, that apply to London's 33 local authorities and the London Fire Brigade's Emergency Planning Department (which provides pan-London emergency planning support to the local authorities under a service level agreement). The standards specify minimum response times for responding to an emergency and for the Borough Emergency Control Centre, and also the minimum requirements for a range of contingency plans or capabilities.

Resources

- A corporate Contingency Planning Team, located within the Policy and Partnerships Unit, Corporate Services Department; comprising
 - Contingency Planning Manager
 - Contingency Planning Officer x2
 - Business Continuity Officer (50 per cent of a post shared with LB Hammersmith and Fulham).

- Borough Emergency Control Centre.
- Input into the writing and maintenance of a variety of contingency plans by colleagues within the business groups.

Examples of what we have dealt with

- Pandemic Flu
- Fuel shortage emergency
- Snow and ice
- Flooding
- Power outages to corporate offices
- Phone outages to corporate offices
- Evacuations
- Royal Marsden Hospital fire
- Loss of water supply to Kensington Town Hall for four days
- Loss of electricity supply to KTH
- Loss of gas supply to KTH
- Loss of Malton Road Hub

Working with Other Emergency Responders

The contingency planning activities of the Royal Borough fully reflect and fit with the pan-London contingency plans and emergency planning arrangements. We are represented at the London Resilience Forum by the Chair of the Local Authorities Panel, and through the Central London Sub-Regional Resilience Forum. We are a part of the London Local Authority Gold scheme, the strategic representation of all of London's local authorities in a major emergency by a Chief Executive, with links to all 33 London local authorities via the London Local Authorities Coordination Centre. Our links with local emergency responders is via the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Resilience Forum, a statutory body under the Civil Contingencies Act. We participate in regional emergency planning exercises, most recently Exercise Unified Response.

London's local authorities have a Mutual Aid scheme that enables a responding authority to seek support if needed, equipment and people, when responding to a large scale incident.

Responding to a typical major incident or emergency

- Several Council services may be called upon to respond to an emergency in the community, to support the responding emergency services and affected residents. The corporate Contingency Management Plan contains details of the type and scale of emergency that might be faced, the call-out arrangements, the tactical and strategic management arrangements, and looks towards recovery management. This plan is regularly reviewed and updated when required. This corporate plan is supported by a variety of Annexes that provide contacts information and support the response to specific

risks/incidents.

- Council services that might be called upon to respond to an emergency, in or out of hours, will have their own emergency plans or arrangements, as appropriate to their needs. The Contingency Planning Team maintain a comprehensive contact list of officers from across the departments who may be called-out to respond.
- Coordination of the Council's overall response is carried out by the Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC). A number of Council staff are trained to work in the BECC when activated, and exercises are conducted to consolidate their training and to validate the plans.
- A major incident or emergency in the borough could involve a number of Council services in response. An example would be an evacuation of a large number of residents because of, say, a fire or explosion in a building. Calls from the emergency services will be routed to the Duty Emergency Planning Officer. An assessment will be made of the type, scale and impact of the incident. If the full Contingency Management Plan is required, the Duty EPO will call-out a trained Local Authority Liaison Officer and send that officer to the incident scene to represent the Council and work with the emergency services incident commanders. The Borough Emergency Control Centre will be opened. Council departments/ services needed for the response will be contacted. A suitable building for use as an Emergency Rest Centre for the evacuees will be identified (we currently have 32 premises in the borough, a mixture of community and faith halls, and some council buildings, available to us for this role) and the British Red Cross will be contacted to provide a team of trained volunteers to staff the rest centre. The Town Clerk, Leader, Cabinet Member and Ward Councillors will be notified of the incident. The Media and Communications Office will be alerted so they may handle any press queries.
- If the incident results in emotional distress to residents and visitors, we can put in place a Humanitarian Assistance Centre, staffed by all of the agencies which can provide advice and assistance to those affected by the incident, such as that which was opened by Westminster City Council in response to the London bombings in July 2005.
- The incident may, of course, be our own. Examples include loss of access to a main office because of a utilities failure. We have a Business Continuity Plan for a major disruption to one of our main office hubs. This plan enables us to rapidly assemble a Service Resilience Group to understand the impact to the provision of council services, particularly the core or critical services, and to put into place the necessary responses to ensure continuity of key services. All high-

priority council services are required to have Service Continuity Plans that will enable them to keep their critical services functioning.

ENDS