

Public Report with Exempt Appendices  
Delegated Officer Decision

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Delegated Officer Decision – 03 July 2024

**Report Title**

Integrated Incident Response and Recovery Plan

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Assistant Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Sam Barstow, Assistant Director, Community Safety & Street Scene

**Report Author(s)**

Claire Hanson, Emergency, Resilience and Safety Manager  
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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The report outlines the considerations, changes and consultation carried out in the development and revision of the Councils former Major Incident Plan, Recovery and Business Continuity frameworks into a holistic and scalable Integrated Incident Response and Recovery Plan. This revision sees a significant sea change and transformation in incident management processes in the recent years.

**Recommendations**

1. That the final draft integrated incident response and recovery plan be adopted as the Councils formal and holistic incident management arrangements.
2. That the inherent transitional risks be acknowledged.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Final Draft Integrated Incident Response and Recovery Plan – Exempt

**Background Papers**

- a) Debrief reports produced following recent local and national incidents
- b) Recommendations made as a result of public inquiry following national recognised Major Incident
- c) UK Government Resilience Framework
- d) National Resilience Standards

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**  
None, other than Strategic Leadership Team

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

Yes (appendix 1 only)

*An exemption is sought for (Appendix 1) under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as The Integrated Incident Response and Recovery Plan is classified official sensitive as it contains sensitive information relating to the Council's holistic response to a Major Incident, as well as information relating to sites of specific interest, risk and threat levels and details of the Council's response.*

*It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information in order to maintain the security of the information held within the plan.*

# Integrated Incident Response and Recovery Plan

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The council continues to meet statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) by maintaining individual, bespoke plans for incident management, notably the Council wide Major Incident Plan (MIP), Framework for Recovery and individual service level Business Continuity Plans.
- 1.2 Recent years has seen a changing civil protection landscape with, not least, increased and heightened national scrutiny and plentiful learning following notable events and emergencies for which in many cases the after-effects are still being addressed. Additionally, and in response, the Government has published the UK National Standards of Expectation as well as the UK Government Resilience Framework aimed at strengthening the underpinning systems related to risk in civil contingencies and uplift in resilience capabilities.
- 1.3 The Councils current Major Incident Plan, and associated recovery and business continuity frameworks have undergone a significant and fundamental review and revision over recent months. This review has included and incorporated the following actions:
  - Reflection and learning as a result of the 2019 and 2023 flooding events impacting significant parts of the Borough
  - Reflection and learning as a result of the Covid 19 Global Pandemic
  - Reflection and learning as a result of other incidents occurring within the Brough and within neighbouring authorities
  - Learning as a result of incidents and emergencies attracting national attention and being subject to public inquiry
  - Liaison with other key officers across the Council to review practice and processes deployed in incident response
  - Reviewed practice and process “tested in anger” in many instances when used in responding to actual incidents occurring whilst the review was underway
  - Extensive benchmarking and research with other local authorities both locally and nationally (using the core city network as well as other contacts known to the Emergency Planning Service)
  - Consideration of, and alignment to the evolving Local Resilience Forum requirements in terms of potential demand for Council representatives to be part of multi-agency response cells should they be activated in response to an incident
  - Extensive consultation across key Council services, including with targeted and discreet leadership teams and through the Councils Resilience Governance Group
  - Engagement, consultation and agreement from the Councils Strategic Leadership Team in terms of proposed changes and amendments

## **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 A fundamental review of arrangements has been undertaken with the resultant final draft integrated response and recovery plan as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 This final draft is produced based on the principle of viewing the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) in the wider context of nationally endorsed Integrated Emergency Management (IEM). It is a rationalised blend of the three component disciplines of Emergency Planning, Business Continuity and Recovery, creating one overarching mainstay for response and recovery
- 2.3 A sectionalised approach has been utilised meaning not all sections will be required in all incident scenarios therefore providing scalable, adaptable, and flexible command, control, and coordination processes, supported by integrated communications.
- 2.4 Additionally, this approach strengthens and defines the incident command structure with associated strategic, tactical, and operational management level coordination. Overall, this model provides accountable processes and procedures aligned to statutory and partner requirements.
- 2.5 This final draft is an overt display of organisational resilience with associated accountability; it promotes a whole council approach requiring designated leads, champions and council incident responders, that are trained and competent in processes and activities.
- 2.6 Key and significant updates and changes include:
  - a) This draft Plan utilises, the national doctrine and terminology for example Tactical Commander (as opposed to Borough Emergency Coordinator) to ensure clear intention in line with guidance and expectations.
  - b) Formal migration away from a “volunteer culture” of responders to designated cohorts of officers across the Council being more integral to the response and recovery. Importantly, pre-identified staff must be trained and versed in incident management prior to any deployment in response; a point that has been highlighted on multiple occasions in recent Public Inquiries
  - c) A move away from the defined parameters of Directorates and their silo and linear approach to a thematic operational response cell approach. The reality of the response to recent incidents both within the Rotherham Borough and across wider Local Resilience Forum partners has demonstrated that a more fluid thematic approach has been effective. These cells are not only reflective of the key challenges that have thus far presented in an incident response, but also reflective of any multi agency operational response cells that may be established, meaning the transition between a single agency, and multi-agency response is seamless for any Council representative engaged in response cell activity.

- d) The formal introduction of an alert and assessment phase - this element of the Plan has been updated in a bid to promote consistency of approach, action and response parameters. It now includes a stress test, assessment criteria, triggers and scale of impact chart for reference to inform the level of response. This process aims to create consistency across the spectrum of incident response capabilities (i.e. incidents that meet the prescribed definition of Major Incident or an Emergency and those of a lower scale and impact).
- e) Strategic priorities for response and recovery have been included as good practice to inform a starting point, will be tailored based on the incident scenario.
- f) Business Continuity – this Draft Plan includes a stronger and more integrated thread of Business Continuity, particularly in the context of a coordination role and utilises the same embedded incident management structure for coordination. Similarly using this approach absorbs and includes previously utilised service impact reporting and other monitoring tools and processes to understand any impact on council business of a disruption or incident.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 As outlined above, this draft plan reflects many lessons that have been identified across multiple incidents, both occurring local and nationally and therefore adopted as robust recommendations for continual improvement in incident management processes and practices.
- 3.2 This plan also reflects integration and alignment with the LRF and its potential cell structures that may be mobilised in an incident response.
- 3.3 The Council, as a category 1 responder, is required under the Civil Contingences Act to *“maintain plans for preventing emergencies; reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of emergencies in both the response and recovery phases; and taking other action in the event of emergencies”*
- 3.4 The attached Integrated Incident Response and Recovery Plan seeks to achieve this statutory requirement.
- 3.5 On this basis the final draft integrated incident response and recovery plan is recommended for adoption by the Council.

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place across the Council, including presentation to and support gained from key areas including Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), Adult Care & Integration SMT, Public Health SMT and Strategic Commissioning SMT.
- 4.2 Additionally, individual consultation on thematic response cells and individual elements of the plan has taken place, including:

- Community & Member Themed cell (Neighbourhoods)
- Democratic Services
- Adult Care & Integration regarding Humanitarian Assistance theme with statutory requirements and current, established Rest Centre processes.
- Resilience, Health, Safety & Wellbeing governance group (including Directorate representatives for bespoke Directorate consultation).
- Bereavement Services.
- Communications team (including personal specific communications plan to support incident management and underpinning work as an active member of the LRF communications and warning and informing group).
- Information Governance (including privacy statement)
- Facilities Management
- Legal Services
- Health & Safety, including risk assessments.
- Financial Services, including Bellwin arrangements.
- Human Resources (remuneration and wellbeing provision)

4.3 Additionally this plan has undergone proof of concept through response to actual incidents that have occurred recently, including:

- Mobilisation and effectiveness of the Council Tactical Management Group in coordination and delivery of effective response
- Activation of the thematic cell concept to lead specific tasks such as data and information, infrastructure and environment in the recent flooding response (October 2023)
- Use of revised template documentation

## **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 It is proposed that, with support from members of SLT and Cabinet Members to reduce blockers and demonstrate leadership buy-in, a shortened, concise timetable could be agreed to mitigate the transitional risk period.

5.2 With that in mind, the following timetable is recommended for publication, and dissemination of this plan. This mirrors the recommended timetable previously made to SLT.

June 24	Delegated Officer Decision to adopt the revised Integrated Response and Recovery Plan.
July 24	Plan publication and dissemination, including awareness raising.
July 24	Commence delivery of training, testing and exercising program.
Sept 24	Operational Response cell leads as described within this briefing finalise cell response processes and procedures as needed to achieve the objectives as outlined in the revised Integrated response and Recovery Plan. Note this

timeframe has been elongated to allow for summer absences and challenges this may present.

- Oct 24 Defined cell leads (Heads of Service) training and micro testing of component elements of plans and processes.
- Nov 24 Council wide exercise to test and validate the integrated response and recovery plan, as well as thematic processes – including debrief

**6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**

- 6.1 *There are no direct financial implications arising from the Integrated Incident Response and Recovery Plan.*

**7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**

- 7.1 Through the consultation process Legal Services colleagues have reviewed the plan, including legislation quoted and its use in the event of an incident.

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 Though consultation processes, the plan has been shared with HR colleagues, particularly in connection with the remuneration and wellbeing arrangements.

**9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 Care, welfare and provision for children, young people and vulnerable persons is intrinsic to any response and recovery in an incident or emergency. To further assure these processes, this Plan provides a Humanitarian Assistance theme lead and cell, to be under the jurisdiction of specialist officers within the council, the premise that processes and procedures undertaken mitigate and protect, as far as possible, any persons affected.

**10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

- 10.1 Incident response plans take account of different groups of needs of people with protected characteristics, including vulnerabilities (definition of vulnerable people as provided by national guidance is included in the plan, as well as processes for identifying vulnerable people as affected by an incident), sensory or mobility impairment (ie Evacuation planning)

**11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

11.1 This plan intends to provide a framework for response to incidents and emergencies as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act, and JESIP principles, this includes extreme weather events that may become more impactful as the full effects of climate change come to fruition. This plan is flexible and scalable to meet changing needs.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

12.1. As a Category 1 responders, the Council and key partners such as the Emergency Services work collaboratively under statutory duty to plan, prepare, respond, test and continually improve planning and contingencies. This Plan has been developed in line with multi-agency arrangements, harnessing synergies and inclusively integrating partner needs within provision

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 It is important to reinforce and recognise that this plan is a significant sea change and largest transformation in incident management processes in recent years. Therefore, the inherent transitional risks and challenges should be acknowledged. Equally, the heavy investment across the council should not be underestimated.

13.2 Transitional risk whilst the new plan becomes embedded include:

- a) The need to uplift and enhance training and testing of the plan. This is key to the cyclic process of embedding incident management across the Council. A training program is in place to support the delivery of this plan and enhance knowledge across responders and will commence in line with the timetable described earlier.
- b) The need to uplift some processes – currently under review and being progressed.
- c) Embedding of previously undefined roles such as the Humanitarian Assistance Liaison Officer (promoted as good practice and scrutinised as part of the Grenfell Enquiry).
- d) The need to develop and embed the thematic approach; to be developed in line with already pre-defined, and SLT endorsed points of contact across the Council.
- e) Continued migration away from a “volunteer” culture.

## **14. Accountable Officers**

Claire Hanson, Emergency Resilience and Safety Manager  
Emma Ellis, Head of Service, Community Safety and Regulatory Services  
Sam Barstow, Assistant Director, Community Safety and Street Scene

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

Named Officer	Date
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Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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<sup>i</sup> Emergency Preparedness (Chapter 5) October 2011  
[Emergency Preparedness chapter5 amends 2112011.pdf](#)  
[\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)